



**Pittwater House**

# Overseas Student Handbook

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*Last Updated: February 2019-v2*

The Pittwater House Schools Ltd  
CRICOS Provider Code: 00897J

**achieve a balance**  
co-educational campus | single-sex education

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# Welcome to Pittwater House

Each year Pittwater House welcomes overseas students from all over the world. Studying abroad can be a wonderful and life enriching experience and we hope you will consider taking that journey with us.

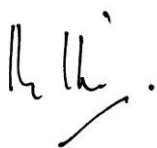
Our small student population and low student-teacher ratio means our teachers are able to create great opportunities for each child. As a smaller school, we can also nurture and follow our students' emotional well-being closely, ensuring they settle into school and are able to face the challenges that school brings.

This booklet is intended to provide you with information that relates specifically to you as an overseas student. Along with your parents or guardians, please take the time to read though this handbook prior to enrolling to ensure you understand the requirements of studying at Pittwater House.

A hierarchy of care is provided commencing with the Form Teachers and working through to the Heads of School. There are dedicated staff on hand, including the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator, who is available to assist students and parents at any time whether you have specific questions, or just need a chat.

Your teachers and other staff on campus will also be willing to help you with any problems so please ask for assistance whenever you are unsure.

Best of luck with your studies and welcome to Pittwater House.



Dr Nancy Hillier

Principal

*This information booklet contains information which is specifically relevant to overseas students and must be read in addition to the Student Handbook which can be found on the Pittwater House website by searching for 'handbook'. All current students, parents and guardians have 24 hour access to overseas student Policies, Procedures and Forms on the Pittwater House website (search for 'policies').*

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# SECTION 1

## About Pittwater House

Pittwater House is an independent, non-selective, non-denominational school that caters for both male and female pre-schoolers from 3 – 5 years old in our Early Childhood Centre, right through to Junior School (Kindergarten to Year 6) and Senior School (Years 7 to 12). We are located in Collaroy, on the idyllic northern beaches of Sydney.

At Pittwater House we understand that boys and girls learn differently, so we offer single gender classes within a co-educational campus. Students are taught in single-sex classes for all years from Kindergarten to Year 8 but are also given the opportunity to socialise in a real-world environment with co-educational playgrounds.

Commencing in Senior School there is a gradual introduction to co-educational classes in elective subjects while English, Maths, Science, History, Geography and PDHPE continue to be taught in single-sex classes. In years 11 and 12, all classes are fully co-educational.

Pittwater House is purposely structured for academic success. All academic decisions, professional development, class sizes, cohort structures, uses of technology and resourcing are aimed at enhancing academic outcomes for all students. We offer small class sizes so teachers can give each child individual attention but at the same time offer a broad range of subjects and activities.

Students are placed in 'form classes' which form the basis of the School's pastoral care system. These form classes are based on year and gender groupings. Each form class has a form teacher who is responsible for the day-to-day welfare of the students. Any questions relating to students' progress may be directed to Form Teachers, specific academic teachers, senior academic or pastoral staff.

More information about the structure and benefits of our School can be found on our website.

# Course Information

## COURSES OFFERED

**Provider Name: The Pittwater House Schools**

**CRICOS Provider Code: 00897J**

Course Name: Primary (Years K to 6)

Course Code: 070891B

Course Name: Junior Secondary (Years 7 to 10)

Course Code: 00811A

Course Name: Senior Secondary (Years 11 and 12)

Course Code: 008512M

Each year of study is broken up into four terms and comprises of 38-39 weeks of study.

## CURRICULUM

Pittwater House follows the curriculum set out by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) include English, Mathematics, Science, Human Society and its environment (HSIE), Languages, Technologies, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE). The NESA curriculum is divided up into six stages:

- Early Stage 1 – Kindergarten
- Stage 1 – Years 1 and 2
- Stage 2 – Years 3 and 4
- Stage 3 – Years 5 and 6
- Stage 4 – Years 7 and 8
- Stage 5 – Years 9 and 10
- Stage 6 – Years 11 and 12

Your child can choose from a wide variety of electives while still completing the NSW Education Standards Authority curriculum. This enables us to push the boundaries of your child's academic abilities while helping them grow into independent learners capable of creative and critical thinking.

### **Early Childhood Centre curriculum (students aged 3-5 years)**

All activities and programs implemented at Pittwater House Early Childhood Centre are based on the Early Years Learning Framework, the national curriculum set out by the Australian Council of Governments.

The framework is a holistic approach to early-learning. It acknowledges that play is the best vehicle for early-learning as it provides the most appropriate stimuli for brain development.

We focus on five learning outcomes:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators

### **Junior School, Kindergarten – Year 6 curriculum**

For our junior students, we develop lessons in line with the NESA syllabus and their six key learning areas:

- Mathematics
- English
- Human society and its environment (HSIE)
- Science and technology
- Creative arts
- Physical development, health and physical education (PDHPE)

We enhance this standard syllabus with extra subjects related to:

- Language (such as French and Chinese), taught by our specialised, foreign language teachers
- Music and choir
- Visual arts
- Science
- Technology
- Physical education and health

### **Senior School, Years 7-12 curriculum**

We emphasise traditional subjects while offering an engaging variety of electives.

All students in Stage 4 (Years 7 and 8) study the compulsory core subjects:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Geography
- History
- Personal development, health and physical education (PDHPE)
- Music
- Visual arts
- Language
- Technology

### **Stage 4 electives**

In Year 7, students can choose one of the following elective subjects:

- Dance
- Drama



- Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)
- Philosophy—a cross curricular, critical-thinking project

A wide range of subject choices is available for each year group. More specific details about subject choices are available on our website by searching for 'curriculum' and following the link to 'Electives offered'.

In Years 7 and 8 most subjects are compulsory as prescribed by NESA. The exception to this is the Year 7 Elective and the choice between French and Mandarin in Year 8. For Years 9 and 10 each student must take the mandatory subjects set by NESA. Aside from the mandatory core subjects' students in Year 9 and 10 must also choose a number of elective subjects.

For Years 11 and 12, each of the subjects are assigned 'units' to contribute to the NSW Higher School Certificate. Each candidate is required to undertake a minimum of twelve units in Year 11 (excluding extension subjects) and a minimum of 10 units in Year 12 (although many continue to carry twelve).

University entrance or the ATAR is calculated from the student's best 10 units, and this must include two units of English.

All Subjects taken in Years 11 and 12 lead to the awarding of the NSW Higher School Certificate after the completion of the State exams at the end of Year 12.

Detailed syllabus information can be found on the NESA website at <https://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/>

## **TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT**

All courses are taught in line with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) syllabus and regulations. Our teachers use a wide range of teaching methods to maximise the learning of our students. These methods include but are not limited to face-to-face classes supported by a wide range of print and electronic support material, using a varied delivery methods to engage visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic learners, practical participation classes, excursions, camps and small group or private tutorials. Classes incorporate both individual learning and group exercises.

Students are provided access to the following Learning Technology resources:

- An online learning portal, Canvas, accessing a range of learning materials for each class;
- Provisioned with an email address and Google Drive accounts;
- The following software is provided for students at no extra charge: Office 365 and the Adobe Creative Cloud suite;

- The school provides a Support Desk for students to access assistance;
- All classrooms are equipped with data projectors;
- There is a school wide wi-fi network with fast internet access.

Pittwater House employs a range of methods to gauge course progress including, but not limited to:

- Formal examinations
- Informal class tests
- Assignments
- Speeches and oral presentations
- Practical assessments
- Class participation

## **ACADEMIC MONITORING AND ASSISTANCE**

The Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator, Ms Kayte Eyre, is responsible for the monitoring and intervention of students' academic progress.

The Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator works closely with the Heads of School, Faculty Co-ordinators and your teachers to monitor student's success or the areas in which students may require assistance.

If students have any concerns, they should make contact with the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator, who will discuss the issue with them and where required, devise a plan to assist in their academic goals, which may or may not involve referring the student to another teacher with an appropriate skill set.

As part of the monitoring by the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator, there is a dedicated welfare period provided for Overseas Students. This a minimum of one period a fortnight and is held in the secondary library. The Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator will use this time to discuss student progress, academics and welfare and to make general announcements to the group as required.

In order to assist overseas students to reach their academic goals, the School has set up a voluntary Maths study centre two days a week and a compulsory EAL/D support lesson for students needing English Language support. More EAL/D lessons may be arranged if deemed necessary.

Year 11 and 12 students undertake an EAL/D course conducted by an English Teacher. The homework/study sessions mentioned above are optional for Year 11 and 12 students.

It is expected that any language support or study assistance provided by the school is to be attended by students. This support may fall outside the school core hours and will most likely be from 3.30 – 5pm Monday to Thursday.

## **COURSE CREDIT**

The School does not grant course credits for the prior learning of Overseas students.

## **OTHER PROVIDERS**

In some circumstances, the school will offer Year 11 and 12 students the opportunity to study a course offered by one of three additional providers:

- TAFE
- School of Languages
- Saturday Language School

Acceptance into the programs is by application and where the School does not believe it in the best interest of the student for reasons including but not limited to capability or timetable clashes, the co-ordinator may reject the student's application to undertake study with another provider. Courses taken with these external providers may not make up greater than 25% of a student's total workload. The requirements for attendance and course progress and completion set out for the student's study remain in place for study with other providers.

# Enrolling at Pittwater House

Overseas students can join Pittwater House at any year level from Kindergarten up to Year 11 if a vacancy exists and the student satisfies the conditions of enrolment. The conditions of enrolment are provided in Section 3 of this Handbook and also on the Application for Enrolment Form for overseas students available on our website.

An overseas student is any student who is not an Australian citizen or permanent resident.

The process to enrol an overseas student is outlined below:

- The overseas student's parents or guardian must complete the Application for Enrolment Form for overseas students and submit this in pdf format to [overseas.enrolments@tphs.nsw.edu.au](mailto:overseas.enrolments@tphs.nsw.edu.au) with a copy of the student's passport and any other required documentation pertaining to English levels.
- Once a position is available and the application has been assessed a Provisional Letter of Offer will be issued by Pittwater House to enable the student to obtain a Student Visa. This Provisional Letter of Offer includes an outline of the fees that are required to be paid, Conditions of Enrolment, an Acceptance Agreement and an Accommodation and Welfare Form.
- On receipt of the fees outlined on the Acceptance Agreement Pittwater House will then lodge a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) electronically
- After receipt of a CoE Overseas students must complete the requirements to apply for a Student Visa to study in Australia
- Overseas students must advise the School's Admissions Office of their arrival details in Sydney at [overseas.enrolments@tphs.nsw.edu.au](mailto:overseas.enrolments@tphs.nsw.edu.au)

Overseas students can contact the School's Enrolment Office for further details by phoning +61 2 9972 5746 or submit your enquiry online via our website.

# General School Information

## DATES FOR SCHOOL TERMS

2019	Term Begins	Term Ends	Weeks
Term 1	Wed 30 January – New Students Thur 31 January – Returning Students	Fri 12 April	11
Term 2	Tues 30 April	Fri 28 June	10
Term 3	Tues 23 July	Fri 20 September	9
Term 4	Tues 15 October	Wed 11 December (K-6) Thur 12 December (7-12)	9

2020	Term Begins	Term Ends	Weeks
Term 1	Wed 29 January – New Students Thur 30 January – Returning Students	Thursday 9 April	11
Term 2	Tuesday 28 April	Friday 26 June	10
Term 3	Tuesday 21 July	Friday 18 September	9
Term 4	Tuesday 13 October	Wed 9 December (K-6) Thur 10 December (7-12)	9

### IMPORTANT:

- Students must be present every day of the term dates listed above unless granted permission from the Principal.
- Students must not book plane tickets or holidays during term time. All days absent will be recorded and will affect the students visa requirements. Furthermore, you may miss important assessment tasks or examinations, which will affect your visa requirements regarding course performance.

## GENERAL SCHOOL RULES

It is essential that students consult the Student Handbook for a full list of the general school rules some of which have been listed below. The Student Handbook is available on the Pittwater House website via the Portal under the School Information tab.

- No student may colour their hair.
- No student may leave the school campus throughout the school day.
- Chewing gum is not allowed on campus.
- Smoking is prohibited on campus and it is also against the law for those under 18 years.
- Students suspected of any involvement with drug use, either on or off campus will be expelled and have their visa cancelled.
- Alcohol, or being under the influence of alcohol, is prohibited on campus. It is also against the law for those under 18 years.

## **TRANSPORT TO AND FROM SCHOOL**

If Overseas students require transport to and from School, these are the available options:

- Pittwater House operates private bus routes for Pittwater House students only. For more information search for 'bus timetable' on [pittwaterhouse.com.au](http://pittwaterhouse.com.au). Places are limited and bookings are essential. The booking form can be completed online using the Skoolbag app on your smartphone or using Skoolbag via the parent portal on [pittwaterhouse.com.au](http://pittwaterhouse.com.au)
- If you are travelling on government buses you will need to purchase an Opal Card – a NSW government smartcard that enables travel on all modes of public transport in and around Sydney. For more information visit [www.opal.com.au](http://www.opal.com.au)

## **DETENTION**

- Detentions are issued for misconduct or negligent work and are held during lunch times.
- Detentions for higher level or repeat infractions may be issued for after school hours or Saturdays.

## **SCHOOL UNIFORM**

A list of the uniform requirements is printed in the Student Handbook available on the Pittwater House website in the Student Portal. However a brief summary has been listed below;

- No students should wear jewellery other than a wristwatch.
- Girls 7 - 12 may wear one pair of stud earrings in the lower lobe.
- Girls with long hair should wear it tied back using a royal blue ribbon (Year 11-12 may wear red) or blue bands.
- No student should wear makeup.
- Boys' hair should be at least 2 cm off the shirt collar.
- Boys should be clean-shaven.
- School blazers should be worn travelling to and from school during terms 2 and 3.
- Only the school backpack should be used to carry books etc. to and from school.
- The school carry bag should be used to carry PE clothes and equipment (not school books).
- School uniform should reflect a student's pride in themselves and their school. Full school uniform must be worn each day.

## **LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DEPARTURE**

All students arriving to school after roll call has finished or departing before the end of the school day must sign in and/or out at reception (located opposite the Great Hall). Failure to do so will result in detentions and possible suspension.

## **LATE ARRIVALS**

- Students arriving late must report to reception immediately upon entering campus to sign in.
- Students will be issued with a pass which must be shown to their teacher to gain entry to the class in session.
- Parents/guardians may provide a reason for the absence using the Skoolbag app on their smartphone or via the Parent Portal on [www.pittwaterhouse.com](http://www.pittwaterhouse.com), or by calling the School.
- Where the late arrival has not been preapproved, the pass will include a parent/guardian authorisation which must be signed and returned to the school in hard copy or parents/guardians may enter a reason and authorisation for the absence directly into Skoolbag.
- Habitually late students will be counselled by the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator and issued detention/s where deemed appropriate.

## **LEAVING EARLY**

- Parents/guardians of students departing early must have completed an Early Departure notification on Skoolbag.
- During the day, the student must have the departure letter signed and approved by a Head of School or chosen delegate.
- At the approved time of departure, the student must report to reception to sign out prior to departing campus.
- When signing out students will be issued with a leave pass which they must carry with them whilst off campus and, should they be asked, produce the pass to police or DEC Officers.

## **HOLIDAY TRAVEL**

- Students must provide the school with a copy of their itineraries before travelling during school holidays.
- Students must remain at school until the last day of term.
- Students must return to school on the first day of term.
- Students who return to their home countries before these dates, or return to school after these dates will be given a Saturday detention (one detention for every day missed) and will be placed on notice where they have breached the requirement of their Visa.
- Severe penalties will be applied to all students who fail to comply with these rules and may lead to Notice of Expulsion.

## **FACILITIES**

Pittwater House has more open and green space on campus per student than any other private school on the Northern Beaches. On our 3.5 hectare campus, we offer outstanding facilities including:

- Swimming pool - eight lane, 25 metre, heated pool

- Large multi-purpose playing field (full-size oval) - catering for rugby, cricket, soccer, PE and various other sporting activities
- Multiple playgrounds for pre-school, Year K-2, Year 3-6 and free space for senior students
- The 'Great Hall' - multi-purpose hall used for assemblies, performances, displays and functions
- Indoor sports complex - with a rubberised synthetic floor it is suitable for basketball, futsal, netball, gymnastics and dance
- Creative Arts Studio – multi-functional space for dance and movement, yoga and performance
- Outdoor courts for tennis, basketball and netball
- Library with two full-time teacher librarians and a full-time library technician, open from 8.30am – 5pm on Mondays and 8am to 5pm Tues to Friday
- Modern science laboratories with preparation rooms
- Art rooms complete with firing kilns for pottery and ceramics
- Applied Technology classrooms for food technology and textiles classes
- Industrial Arts laboratories for woodwork, metalwork and plastics
- Language labs
- Private Bus Fleet
- Health Centre – staffed Monday to Friday 8.30am to 3.30pm by a registered nurse
- Uniform Shop and second-hand Uniform Shop

For more detailed information search for 'facilities' on [pittwaterhouse.com.au](http://pittwaterhouse.com.au)

Upon orientation all students will be conducted on a campus tour to acquaint them with all of the Schools facilities and requirements for use.



## CLASS TIMES

The normal school day runs from 8.30am to 3.30pm Monday to Friday. Dependent on elective subjects, students may be required to attend early lessons from 7.40-8.30am or late lessons from 3.25-4.20pm.

	Day 1 Monday	Day 2 Tuesday	Day 3 Wednesday	Day 4 Thursday	Day 5 Friday
Early Class	7.37am	7.37am	7.37am	7.37am	7.37am
Period 1	8.30am	8.30am	8.30am	8.30am	8.30am
Period 2	9.23am	9.23am	9.23am	9.23am	9.23am
Recess	10.16am	10.16am	10.16am	10.16am	10.16am
Period 3	10.36am	10.36am	10.36am	10.36am	10.36am
Period 4	11.29am	11.29am	11.29am	11.29am	11.29am
Snr Pastoral Jnr Lunch 1	12.22pm	12.22pm	12.22pm	12.22pm	12.22pm
Jnr Lunch 2 & Snr Lunch 1	12.47pm	12.47pm	12.47pm	12.47pm	12.47pm
Snr Lunch 2 & Jnr Pastoral	1.12pm	1.12pm	1.12pm	1.12pm	1.12pm
Period 5	1.39pm	1.39pm	1.39pm	1.39pm	1.39pm
Period 6	2.32pm	2.32pm	2.32pm	2.32pm	2.32pm
Day ends K-2	3.00pm	3.00pm	3.00pm	3.00pm	3.00pm
Day Ends 3-6	3.20pm	3.20pm	3.20pm	3.20pm	3.20pm
Day Ends 7-12	3.25pm	3.25pm	3.25pm	3.25pm	3.25pm
Late Class	3.25pm	3.25pm	3.25pm	3.25pm	3.25pm
Late Class Ends	4.18pm	4.18pm	4.18pm	4.18pm	4.18pm
	Day 6 Monday	Day 7 Tuesday	Day 8 Wednesday	Day 9 Thursday	Day 10 Friday
Early Class	7.37am	7.37am	7.37am	7.37am	7.37am
Period 1	8.30am	8.30am	8.30am	8.30am	8.30am
Period 2	9.23am	9.23am	9.23am	9.23am	9.23am
Recess	10.16am	10.16am	10.16am	10.16am	10.16am
Period 3	10.36am	10.36am	10.36am	10.36am	10.36am
Period 4	11.29am	11.29am	11.29am	11.29am	11.29am
Snr Pastoral Jnr Lunch 1	12.22pm	12.22pm	12.22pm	12.22pm	12.22pm
Jnr Lunch 2 & Snr Lunch 1	12.47pm	12.47pm	12.47pm	12.47pm	12.47pm
Snr Lunch 2 & Jnr Pastoral	1.12pm	1.12pm	1.12pm	1.12pm	1.12pm
Period 5	1.39pm	1.39pm	1.39pm	1.39pm	1.39pm
Period 6	2.32pm	2.32pm	2.32pm	2.32pm	2.32pm
Day ends K-2	3.00pm	3.00pm	3.00pm	3.00pm	3.00pm
Day Ends 3-6	3.20pm	3.20pm	3.20pm	3.20pm	3.20pm
Day Ends 7-12	3.25pm	3.25pm	3.25pm	3.25pm	3.25pm
Late Class	3.25pm	3.25pm	3.25pm	3.25pm	3.25pm
Late Class Ends	4.18pm	4.18pm	4.18pm	4.18pm	4.18pm

K-2 students are dismissed at 3.00pm. However, students can attend a literature session and be collected at 3.20pm with older siblings.

# CAMPUS MAP



# Living in Australia

Living conditions in Australia are generally very good. Living standards in Sydney are very high and basic things, such as drinking water from the tap and power supplies, are safe and continuous and air quality is good to excellent on most days. Medical support is readily available, telecommunications systems are expensive compared to most countries but there is easy access to a variety of hardware, plans and unfettered internet. Australia has a stable political system with great traditions and a modern approach to law and order.

Government offices and officials are generally helpful and courteous, there is little corruption, an open and uncontrolled media, Police are firm but fair and the Australian Defence Force provide strong national security and a very safe place to live.

Australia is home to great sports opportunities for everyone and this is reflected in schools and communities across the continent. There are excellent cultural and entertainment activities, many free. Sydney boasts many library, gallery, concert and theatre venues and regular music, drama and arts activities daily.

## **COST OF LIVING**

Worry about money can cause additional undue strain on students at a time when they are trying to settle into a new environment and culture. All students and families should be aware, and capable of meeting of the costs associated with living and studying in Australia. Students need to have enough money for accommodation, food, transport, social activities and entertainment, books and some discretionary items such as music or clothing.

Please note if a student takes a part-time or casual job, it is expected this does not interfere in any way with their studies. If it is noted that the student is falling behind in their studies, they will be expected to leave their job. There are visa conditions on all student visas regarding employment. Please ensure you are aware of all conditions of your visa.

The following information serves as a guide only. Your living costs could be higher or lower than this, depending on where you study and the lifestyle that you live. On average, an overseas student needs at least AUD\$20,290 per year for living expenses – AUD\$385-450 per week. This estimate includes accommodation, food and utilities which are all included in Homestay fees. To convert to your own currency, visit <http://www.xe.com/>

More information on the cost of living in NSW is available on the [Australian Government's Study in Australia website](#).

## **ROADS AND TRAFFIC**

In Australia, people drive on the left-hand side of the road. Always be careful when crossing roads. It is safest to cross at a set of traffic lights or at a pedestrian crossing marked by white stripes on the road – also known as a zebra crossing.

## **AUSTRALIAN BEACHES**

We are fortunate enough to be located on the beautiful Northern Beaches of Sydney. There are many patrolled beaches along our coastline that can be easily accessed to enjoy over summer. To ensure your safety though you need to be aware that surf conditions can sometimes be dangerous. Overseas tourists and those unfamiliar with the beach are at greater risk. Please ensure you read through the Beach Safety Factsheet at the back of this handbook before you visit the beach.

## **MONEY**

The Australian dollar (AUD) is based on the decimal system with 100 cents to the dollar. Australian currency is available as plastic notes and coins which come in the following denominations:

Notes	Gold Coins	Silver Coins
\$100, \$50, \$20, \$10 and \$5	\$2 and \$1	50c, 20c, 10c and 5c

Most stores also accept credit cards and debit cards. Large businesses, including telephone, gas and electricity companies, also allow you to pay bills directly from your Australian bank account, by telephone or internet.

## **BANKING**

To open a bank account, you must have identification with you (birth certificate, passport or visa). If you are under 16 years of age, your parent or guardian must accompany you to the bank and bring their driver's licence or passport with them. The bank may also ask you for a Tax File Number which you can get from the Australian Taxation Office.

## **TELEPHONES**

If you are making an overseas call from Australia to another country you will have to dial 0011 + country code + area code + telephone number. Overseas phone cards are also available that offer cheaper call rates. These can be purchased from most newsagencies and convenience stores.

## **PUBLIC PAYPHONES**

Public payphones accept coins, pre-paid Phonecards or calling cards (depending on the type of equipment installed) and most are also able to send an SMS to a mobile number (they cannot

receive SMS). Local calls are untimed and cost 50c per call. Long-distance, overseas calls and calls to mobiles are timed and cost 50c every 15-120 seconds depending on the call destination.

## MOBILE PHONES

- Mobile phone services are available from several telephone companies. The telephone companies offer a wide range of phones and payment options.
- Depending on the network in your home country, you may be able to connect your existing mobile phone to an Australian network by installing a new SIM card. Mobile call costs may be more expensive than fixed line calls.
- Many students find it easier to buy pre-paid mobile phone packages which also help to budget for telephone costs.

## POST

- *Australia Post* is the national postal service. Australia Post delivers letters and cards to your home letterbox Monday to Friday.
- Small and large parcels addressed to you are usually held at your local post office. The postman leaves a card in your letterbox and you take the card to your post office to collect your parcel.
- Australia Post offices sell postage stamps, envelopes, pre-paid envelopes, packing boxes, cards and stationery items.
- It is easy to send letters or packages to your family in your home country. Australia Post delivers letters and parcels by airmail to most countries within one week.
- Letters and parcels sent within Australia usually take 1-2 days to be delivered.

## SMOKING

- In Australia, a person must be 18 years old to purchase or to smoke cigarettes including any tobacco products. It is illegal to sell or supply tobacco to someone under 18.
- Smoking in enclosed public places (eg. shopping malls, public transport, cinemas, bars and restaurants) is banned across the country. Smoking is also banned in various outdoor public places. Read more at <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/tobacco/Pages/smoke-free-laws.aspx>
- Smoking is not permitted on or around School grounds, or in any public places whilst you are in school uniform.
- Check with your homestay regarding their rules around smoking at home.

# SECTION 2

## Student Welfare Information

### STUDENT WELFARE

Student welfare is a priority at Pittwater House Schools. The Pastoral system is designed to ensure any student who feels unhappy or worried has a number of experienced counsellors they can speak to. People who can provide assistance are:

#### Primary Contact for All Students

Ms Kayte Eyre  
Head Librarian and Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator  
0419 997 030 | kathryn.eyre@tphs.nsw.edu.au

#### Male Students Yr 7-12

Dr Col Harrison  
Head of Grammar  
0400 999 847

#### Female Students Yr 7-12

Ms Lorna Probst  
Head of College  
0411 135 322

#### All Students Yr K-6

Mrs Ruth Achurch  
Head of Junior School  
0411 726 577

Your Form Teacher  
(the teacher who marks your roll  
each morning)

Your Form Teacher  
(the teacher who marks your roll  
each morning)

Your Class Teacher

#### All students

Mr Sean Panambalana  
School Counsellor

#### All students

Miss Olivia Boyle  
School Counsellor

#### All students

Miss Olivia Boyle or  
Mr Sean Panambalana  
School Counsellors

#### All students

Dr Nancy Hillier - Principal

The people listed above are only the first stage of contacts who can support you at Pittwater House.

If for any reason you are stressed, worried or have a problem you need help with and you cannot locate the people listed above, please come to school reception and we will find another member of staff to assist you.

## **SCHOOL COUNSELLORS**

The school employs two qualified counsellors ensuring adequate availability to support our students. Students may be referred to the counsellor by a member of staff or students can make an appointment to see the School Counsellor in Learning and Support Centre (room MG18 in the Junior School). During school hours, if the School Counsellors are unavailable, students may see the Heads of School, who will make provision for the student based on need.

## **LIMITATIONS OF INTERNAL SCHOOL COUNSELLING SERVICES**

School Counsellors cannot recommend medications and are not always able to conduct long term or intensive clinical counselling and diagnosis. External counselling may be required for students suffering from depression, anxiety, eating or other disorders. When necessary, school counsellors will refer the student to an external counsellor. In these cases, the School can provide additional internal counselling support for such students only in collaboration with an outside psychologist or psychiatrist who takes primary responsibility for treating the individual's particular problem. External clinical supervisors, The Heads of School and the Principal can advise counsellors on this matter should they require a second opinion.

## **EXTERNAL SPECIALISTS**

Where necessary the School may employ or refer students to other external specialists including: Occupational Therapists, Speech Pathologist, Vocational Psychologist, Medical and other specialists as needed.

## **ORIENTATION PROGRAM**

On a student's first day of enrolment they will undergo an Orientation program to familiarise them with both the school and the local area, the services at their disposal and information on who can assist them if they have any issues.

The orientation is undertaken by the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator in a group containing all overseas students commencing in Years 7-11 that term. Junior School students are orientated in class with their classroom teacher.

## **STUDENTS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE**

The school accepts students under 18 years of age travelling without a parent, where they agree to and abide by the rules set out by Pittwater House including homestay placement by Oz Homestay.

## **DEPENDANTS**

If parents are accompanying their child to provide parental care during their schooling in Sydney they are advised to seek consular assistance in obtaining a Supporting Parent Visa.

## HEALTH CENTRE - SCHOOL NURSES

During term time, the School Health Centre is staffed by a Registered Nurse at all times during school hours.

- Students may visit the School Nurse in the Health Centre if they feel unwell during the school day – no appointment is necessary
- If students need to go home due to illness they must report to the nurse who will sign them out of the School
- The Health Centre is located in room MG17 in the Junior School
- If students are feeling ill they must not take it upon themselves to call a parent or guardian to collect them, they must report to the School Nurse first.

## MEDICAL SERVICES

There are two School approved local Medical Centres that offer medical services:

- **Dee Why Family Medical Centre** – located inside Dee Why Grand Shopping Centre, Ground Floor, 15-19 Pacific Parade Dee Why. Phone 1300 333 949. <https://deewhymedical.com.au/>
- **Dee Why General Practice** - Level 3, Dee Why Grand Shopping Centre, enter via 834 Pittwater Rd, Dee Why NSW 2099. Phone 8978 3900. <https://www.ipn.com.au/gp/nsw-dee-why-dee-why-general-practice/>

## CHANGE OF RESIDENCE/HOMESTAY

Please read the Application to Change Address policy included in Section 3 of this Handbook. In summary, students must not change living arrangements without following this process:

1. Discuss your desire to move with the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator
2. If, after your meeting you still wish to move, complete the "Application to Change Address" form included in Section 3 of this Handbook
3. Fill out the form and complete all permissions and attach all required documents
4. Your application will be considered by the Pittwater House Schools Admissions Board and relevant third parties within a maximum of 10 working days
5. You will be advised in writing of the outcome of your application

**IMPORTANT:** Any student who moves residence without approval (including moving after an application is submitted but before approval is granted) is breaching School policy. As a result, it will up to the School's discretion to and will be reported to the Department of Education who may choose to revoke their Confirmation of Enrolment resulting in the cancellation of the student's Study Visa.



## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If you are moving homes (with your legal guardian/homestay family) the School must be informed in writing prior to the move. The school will engage Oz Homestay to inspect on our behalf and ensure the new home continues to meet requirements. Any costs incurred as a result of the change of address will be payable by the student.

## CO-CURRICULAR SPORTS AND ACTIVITIES

The School has a strong culture of co-curricular activity participation. Activities include a myriad of Sports, Creative and Performing Arts groups, academic pursuits and cultural activities.

Groups will be advertised throughout the year by the organising teachers and students who are interested in those activities can access tryout and team information by contacting the Manager of Co-curricular Sports and Activities for information on the preferred sport.

## EMERGENCY CONTACTS

### **Police, Fire, Ambulance – Phone: 000**

Life threatening situations, such as a car crash or a fire.

### **Police Assistance Line (general enquiries and non-emergencies) – Phone: 131 444**

If you are a victim of a crime, other than life threatening or time critical emergency situations, you should contact the Police Assistance Line to make a report. Examples of crimes you can report to this line are: stealing, malicious damage (including graffiti), motor vehicle theft, break and enter, lost property.

### **Local Police Station (Dee Why) – Phone: 9971 3399**

If you are seeking assistance or want to report any incident or allegation involving actual or alleged sexual, physical or other abuse you should contact the local police station. Youth Liaison Officers are available for younger victims.\*

### **Lifeline – Phone: 13 11 14 or go to [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)**

Lifeline provides crisis support, suicide prevention and mental health support services for people of all ages. These can include stresses from work, family or society and physical and mental wellbeing. Lifeline offers support services by phone or through their online chat available on their website.

### **Kids Helpline – Phone: 1800 551 800 or go to [kidshelpline.com.au](http://kidshelpline.com.au)**

Counselling support for people aged 5 to 25 if you're feeling depressed, worried, sad, angry or confused about things like your studies or personal relationships.

### **1800 RESPECT – Phone: 1800 737 732 or go to [www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au)**

Support if you, or someone you know, is experiencing sexual assault or domestic and family violence (all ages). Online chat also available 24 hours and information in various languages.

### **REACHOUT.COM** – an online resource and forum for teenagers. <https://au.reachout.com>

\*Note that Pittwater House has a Child Protection Policy and procedure in line with the guidelines and regulations of the NSW Government's Office of the Children's Guardian. If you would prefer, you can speak with a Pittwater House staff member who will be able to assist you (refer to the information under Student Welfare in this Handbook).

## **PERSONAL SAFETY**

Australia is a relatively safe country however all students should act responsibly and not put themselves in potentially dangerous situations

- Never get into a stranger's car
- Never travel alone at night
- Never hitchhike
- Never give a stranger your personal details (eg. name, address, phone number)
- Never carry large sums of money
- Trust your instinct, if a situation makes you uncomfortable then leave and call a homestay parent or other guardian or teacher immediately
- Always have your homestay parents contact details with you and call them if you are going to be late

# Student Responsibilities Overview

## VISA REQUIREMENTS

- All students must personally ensure that their visa to stay in Australia is valid.
- You should also be aware of the Student Visa Conditions that apply to all student visa holders. Visit the [Department of Home Affairs](#) site or [VEVO for visa holders](#)
- Students must satisfy both the course progress and attendance requirements of their student visa. This means students must complete and achieve a satisfactory mark for all tasks, assessments and examinations in their chosen course as set out by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and attendance at School must not fall below 80% in any given term.
- Failure to meet the requirements of their student visa or the requirements of NESA may result in action that will cause the student's visa to be cancelled.

## HOMESTAY

An educationally and culturally rewarding experience in Australia requires commitment, flexibility and tolerance. It is important that the relationship between the School, homestay parents, guardians and students is cooperative with each party having a clear understanding of the others' expectations.

This document is intended for students, homestay parents and guardians. It establishes a clear set of guidelines which all overseas students must adhere to.

At all times students should have with them the details of their homestay parents including names, address and all relevant contact phone numbers.

### AT SCHOOL A STUDENT IS EXPECTED TO:

1. Attend classes a minimum of 80% of the time each term. Absences include sick days accompanied by a doctor's certificate.
2. Obey both Department of Home Affairs regulations and the laws of Australia.
3. Obey all School rules.
4. At all times demonstrate a priority for his/her studies.
5. At all times conduct himself/herself in a manner which shows self-respect and respect for their school.

### AT HOME A STUDENT IS EXPECTED TO:

1. Show respect and courtesy to their homestay at all times.
2. Follow the rules and expectations of the household, such as curfews, cleanliness and participation in household duties.

3. Give the homestay sufficient notice if not returning for the evening meal.
4. Respect the rules regarding use of the home phone, security of the home and heating of his/her room.
5. Speak to his/her guardian each week.
6. Inform the guardian in advance about Parent/Teacher Interviews and organise appointments with teachers.
7. Consult with the guardian if they wish to stay out overnight and provide all details of the venue including the people who reside at that address, the telephone number and street address.
8. Raise any issues of concern with the guardian and seek assistance and advice when in doubt about anything

### **IMPORTANT DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION REGULATIONS**

Students need to read and understand the following regulations as breaches of these regulations may result in Student Visa's being cancelled.

1. **Any absence from school is monitored and reported.**

By law the School is required to monitor and report student absences. Students who are absent from their school/institution for a period of five consecutive days or more without permission from the school/institution, must be reported to the Department of Immigration and the Student Visa will be automatically cancelled.

2. **Students must attend classes a minimum of 80% of the course duration.**

All absences including sick days accompanied by a doctor's certificate are counted. Students whose attendance falls below 80% in any one term must be reported to the Department of Immigration and the Student Visa will be automatically cancelled. *Please note that Pittwater House requires a minimum of 90% attendance of our students.*

3. **Students must satisfy course requirements**

Students are required to pass all aspects of the course.

4. **Regulations around choice of education provider**

Students must remain with the education provider for whom the student visa was granted for a minimum of 6 months unless adverse circumstances can be shown as to why the requested change is justified.

5. **Comply with the obligations of the student visa**

A student who has a student visa cancelled for non-compliance is not eligible to apply for another student visa for a period of three years and there is no guarantee that the new visa will be granted.

### **IMPORTANT LAWS RELATED TO STUDENTS UNDER 18**

Students under 18 years of age are:

1. Not allowed to buy or drink alcohol or enter licensed premises unaccompanied by a responsible adult.

2. Not permitted to purchase cigarettes.
3. Not permitted to hold a full driver's licence or drive a car.
4. Not permitted to buy a student concession ticket for travel on public transport.
5. When students turn 18, they are permitted to purchase cigarettes and alcohol but will need ID and proof of age to be admitted to most venues which do not admit underage students. However, if a student is driving a vehicle, and is on P plates, there is a NO ALCOHOL restriction so they cannot drive if they have consumed any alcohol.
6. **It is a very serious offence in Australian law to drive a car without a licence.** Students who carry an overseas driver's licence can only use it for a period of six months after arrival in Australia. After that, they are required to apply for a New South Wales driving licence.

## **ATTENDANCE, COURSE PROGRESS, AND COURSE COMPLETION**

Below is an outline of the minimum standards for students regarding their attendance and course requirements while at school. These standards have been imposed by the Department of Immigration regulations which mandate the requirements for overseas students in Australia.

Students should ensure they read and fully understand the requirements for Attendance, Course Progress, and Course Completion as set out in full in section 3 of this Handbook. If at any time a student has a question or concern in regard to attendance or their course progress and completion they should seek the advice of the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator immediately.

### **ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS**

- It is a visa requirement of the student visa that students must attend at least 80% of the course programme. This is measured each term. For example, if a term runs for 9 weeks (45 days) the student must attend a minimum of 36 days. Please note Pittwater House requires attendance to be a minimum of 90%.

### **ABSENCE**

- Any non-attendance day for any reason is counted as a student absence.
- Late arrivals and early departures will also be recorded and counted
- A signed note or guardian notification via the Parent Portal on the Pittwater House website must always be provided to explain any absence. If absence is due to illness, a doctor's certificate from a School-approved medical centre must also be provided.

### **MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE**

- Attendance is monitored daily by both the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator and Head of School. The Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator will interview students at risk of breaching attendance requirements.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF NON ATTENDANCE**

- Where a student's attendance falls below 80% in any term, a letter will be sent to the student, parents and homestay guardian, notifying them of the School's intention to report the student to the Department of Immigration.

## **REPORTING TO GOVERNMENT**

- Where the student does not appeal the process within 20 working days, or withdraws from the appeals process, or the appeals process results in a decision for the school the student will be reported via PRISMS.

## **COURSE PROGRESS REQUIREMENTS**

*This should be read in conjunction with the TPHS Internal Assessment Booklet which will be handed out during week 1 of school.*

- The school will monitor and assess the course progress of each student for the course in which the student is currently enrolled.
- The course progress of all students will be assessed at the end of each term.
- To demonstrate satisfactory course progress a student will need to:
  - Complete all assessment tasks
  - Achieve 'Satisfactory' or above for work habits in all courses
  - Complete a minimum of 12 units of study in Year 11 and 10 units of study in Year 12.
  - Must achieve a pass mark (greater than 50%)

## **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

- Overseas students who fail to meet any one of the above criteria will be placed on probation and given a letter of warning.
- The student will be required to meet with the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator and the Deputy Principal to devise a study timetable which may involve additional supervised study periods, tutorial assistance, additional study skills periods
- Continued failure to meet course progress criteria may result in termination of enrolment and visa cancellation.

## **ASSESSMENT TASKS**

- Must complete all assessment tasks.
- Must also show that a serious attempt has been made to complete the task.  
Late Submission of an Assessment, Task; Failure to show a serious attempt; Failure to complete an Assessment Task; and Medical Certificates.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF UNSATISFACTORY COURSE PROGRESS**

Overseas students must satisfy the requirements of the DIBP and NESAs. Both of these departments apply serious penalties to students who do not meet course requirements.

If a student misses three assessment tasks, the DIBP will be informed that the student is not making Satisfactory Academic Progress and the student visa will be cancelled.

## **NESA RELATED CONSEQUENCES FOR FAILING TO COMPLETE ASSESSMENT TASKS (YEARS 9-12)**

- If sufficient work is not completed an 'N' warning will be issued by NESAs
- A second 'N' warning may result in an 'N' award and a failure to have the completion of that subject listed on the student's Record of Achievement. In this case these units would not be used in the calculation of the ATAR and could seriously jeopardise the student's ability to gain entry to an Australian university.

## **RIGHT OF APPEAL**

Students who believe an assessment task has been unfairly marked may apply to the Faculty Coordinator or the Deputy Principal to have an assessment task remarked by a second marker.

## **CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE**

Students who require a Certificate of Attendance need to meet with the Deputy Principal, Mr James Walmsley, to make the request. Please allow 24 hours for the request to be completed. The signed certificate will then be left at Reception for collection.

# Homestay Guidelines for Students

## **RESPECT THE HOMESTAY**

Please be polite, respectful and friendly to all members of the Homestay family and respect their privacy.

- It is customary and polite, to say “please”, when asking, and “thank you” when receiving.
- Australian’s generally do not have locks on their internal doors, please do not enter other people’s bedrooms without permission and knocking first, even if the door is open.
- Do not enter the bathroom if the door is shut, knock first to make sure that no-one is using the bathroom.
- Please communicate with your family regarding playing music, eating, smoking (if you are 18 and over), etc.

## **PAYMENT**

The first payment of 4 weeks is to be paid in advance to Oz Homestay before you travel to Australia. Future payments are paid direct to the family every 4 weeks in advance. It is important that these payments are made on time and in full, the host should not have to constantly ask you for the money. Two weeks paid notice must be given to the homestay when vacating. Students should ask for a receipt when payment has been made to the host family.

## **DAMAGES**

Please inform the homestay of any damages around the house, or accidents. Students must pay for any damages or breakages caused by them or their visitors.

## **VISITORS**

Please ask the homestay family, in advance, if you wish to have friends visit you at home. Your visitors must leave the house before 10pm at latest, or earlier if requested by the homestay family. Visitors of the opposite sex are not permitted in your bedroom unless approved by the homestay. Friends will only be allowed to stay overnight with the family’s permission, which should be requested in advance.

## **TELEPHONE**

The student is to pay for all their own telephone calls. Please discuss the telephone arrangement with the family prior to making calls. Purchase an overseas phone card from the local shop to use when ringing home – do not ring mobile (cell) phones from the host family home – it is expensive. Inform your family back home of the time difference and ask them not to ring after 10pm Sydney time as it is not acceptable and inconsiderate, to most families to receive late night calls.



## **INTERNET**

Internet connection is expensive in Australia. Please discuss the internet arrangement with the family prior to using their service. Please do not download music or movies unless you ask the host first as this could use all their monthly usage. There may be an additional fee to contribute towards internet access which would be required to be paid to the host family directly.

## **GENERAL CLEANLINESS**

Please keep your bedroom tidy and clean at all times. Your bed should be made daily. Please keep your possessions tidy and do not leave them around the house. If you are preparing snacks for yourself, please leave the kitchen clean and tidy afterwards. Leave the bathroom clean and tidy after use.

- Please do not "squat" on the toilet seat. Sit with feet on the floor.
- Please do not put your used toilet paper in the waste bin – please flush it down the toilet.
- Dispose of sanitary pads properly – wrap them and put in the waste bin. Do not put them down the toilet as they can block the toilet plumbing. If you are not sure, ask your homestay mother.
- When showering do not allow the water to go onto the floor outside the shower cubicle.
- As we have a shortage of water in Sydney, please keep your showers short (10 minutes maximum).
- Be considerate – do not spend too much time in the bathroom, remember other family members are waiting to use the bathroom as well.
- Help with tidying the table after meals and assist with wiping the dishes.

The homestay family is not your servant and you are not living in a hotel where everything is done for you. You are living as part of a family and are expected to contribute to light duties around the house.

## **MEALS**

Host families are required to provide you with breakfast and dinner every day and also lunches on weekends. Note that breakfast will usually consist of toast or cereal, and you will probably have to "help yourself." Cooked breakfasts are not common in Australia. Please call the homestay family, at least one hour before meal time, if you will not be home for the dinner or you will be late for dinner. It is a good idea to inform them before you leave for school in the morning.

## **LAUNDRY OR WASHING OF CLOTHES**

This is to be negotiated with the family. The homestay family will provide a washing machine etc. Some homestay families will offer to include the student's washing as part of the family wash, others prefer the student to do their own washing. Do not use the washing machine to wash only one or two items as this is wasting water. Make sure you have a half or full load, depending on the settings of the machine. Ask the homestay family how to use the washing machine and how much soap powder to use.

## **CASH AND VALUABLES**

Do not leave any valuables lying around the house. Keep all valuables in a locked bag in your room. Large amounts of money should be kept in a bank account or in a safe at the bank. Do not leave them in the house and do not tell anyone that you have large amounts of cash. If you are going out – do not carry large amounts of cash in your wallet or purse and make sure you don't allow other people to see how much cash you have on you when paying for goods. Be discreet.

## **INSURANCE**

All care is taken by Oz Homestay and your homestay family to ensure you and your valuables are safe however they do not accept any responsibility in the case of personal injury, accident or loss of personal items. It is therefore important that all students take their own personal travel insurance to protect themselves against these occurrences. The OSHC, the compulsory medical insurance taken by all students on student visa, does not cover loss or damage of personal items.

## **FAMILY OUTINGS**

If your family is going on an outing and invite you, then this is a great opportunity for you to see other places, talk with the family and relax. Try to participate with the family as much as possible, even if it is supermarket shopping, this will help with your English and learning the western cultures.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Please communicate with your family – this solves many problems. If you have a question – ask the family – they are there to help you settle into the home as well as into the Australian lifestyle.

## **CONTINUATION OF CARE**

If you are staying in a homestay, the School will check at least every 6 months, that your homestay conditions are meeting the required criteria. Oz Homestay also conducts physical checks annually on behalf of the School. If, at any time, you are concerned about your living arrangements, please contact the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator immediately and discuss your concerns. Often, these concerns can be addressed with some open communication that can be facilitated by the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator if necessary.

# Homestay Requirements

The home must be clean and have appropriate furnishings suitable for students up to and including the age of 18 years;

- The Homestay Hosts / guardians must reside at the Homestay Premises;
- Each student is to have as a minimum their own room, bed, desk or if a shared room no more than 2 (two) persons per room (same sex) each of whom must have separate bed and desk;
- Students are not to share rooms with host family members and sharing arrangements will only be provided if the parents of the student(s) so request;
- Rooms assigned to students are solely for the student's use and not for the use of other family members for uses that require regular access such as storage;
- There are to be no more than 3 (three) overseas students residing in the home;
- Students are to be given a key to the home or arrangements made so that the student can gain access to the home at any time;
- There must be adequate lighting for study purposes;
- There must be heating in winter and some means of cooling in summer;
- There must be access to bathroom, with reasonable time allowed for showers (10 minutes);
- There must be access to kitchen and laundry facilities and use of shared living areas of home;
- The Homestay Host is to provide 2 (two) meals a day and food should be available for students to make themselves a light lunch (a sandwich and piece of fruit) and an after school snack. In providing meals, the Homestay Host must be aware of and take account of cultural differences and dietary needs;
- House rules are to be discussed and explained to the student by the host parents, (including but not limited to friends visiting, use of phone and incoming calls, cleaning of room or other household tasks, meal times and rules for behaviour such as going out and times for arriving home, manners and courtesy);
- Use of telephone and/or computer facilities is to be at students own expense. However charges to the student should only cover the actual cost of phone or internet usage. Use of Homestay internet will be restricted including restrictions on downloads. Internet access is not permitted between 11pm and 6am. Personal items and their insurance to be at the student's own risk;

# Responsibilities of the Guardian

- Attend Enrolment day/interview with the student to assist them with their enrolment.
- Attend school meetings such as parent/teacher interviews, subject selection meetings and other school meetings deemed necessary by the principal on behalf of the parents.
- Ensure the student has regular and punctual school attendance. Student visa regulations require a minimum of 80% attendance and failure to meet attendance requirements can lead to the cancellation of the student visa.
- Notify the Overseas students Co-ordinator, of any changes in address or living arrangements, in writing within 7 days. The guardian must sign the notification and provide full details of the new arrangements.
- Contact the parents and school Co-ordinator in case of an accident, serious illness or medical emergency.
- Assist the student to seek necessary medical attention and obtain proper medical certificates in case of absence. Medical certificates obtained must show a provider number.
- Inform the parents promptly in the event of any problems, discuss solutions with parents and act promptly on their advice.
- Telephone or write to the school Co-ordinator requesting leave for the student for medical, dental or any other appointments, specifying the dates and times of their absence.
- Liaise with the school Co-ordinator concerning behaviour, conduct or any issues that may affect the student's progress.
- Assist the student to understand school and visa requirements and abide by them.
- Assist the student with any cultural problems or difficulties in settling in to life in Australia.
- Ensure that the student behaves acceptably for a young person under 18 in Australia, is home on weekday evenings by an agreed and reasonable time and later on weekends.
- Ensure that the student informs them of where the student will be when away from the home and what time the student expects to be home.
- There should always be a responsible adult at home during the night.
- The family should provide meals for the student and treat the student as one of the family.
- It is not considered appropriate for a student under 18 years to live with a single male.

# Fair Trading NSW Overseas Students Consumer Guide

NSW Fair Trading have put together a Consumer Guide to assist Overseas students.

In Australia, every person has the right to be protected from unfair business practices. NSW Fair Trading is the state government agency that resolves disputes between consumers and businesses on issues such as shopping, refunds, renting, cars, buying and selling property, home building, product safety, scams and more. This information aims to help you understand your consumer rights and responsibilities in NSW.

Please visit [the Fair Trading website](#) for information on:

- Shopping and refunds
- Mobile phones
- Buying a car
- Renting
- Education and training
- Gym memberships
- Travel
- Scams
- Contact NSW Fair Trading

# ESOS Legislative Framework

## **PROTECTION FOR OVERSEAS STUDENTS**

The ESOS Framework (Education Services for Overseas Students) provides the regulatory requirements for education and training institutions offering courses to overseas students in Australia on a student visa. The purpose of the ESOS Framework is to provide tuition protection for overseas students.

## **WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BEING AN OVERSEAS STUDENT IN AUSTRALIA**

The ESOS standards cover a range of information you have a right to know about and the services that must be offered to you by Australian education providers. These include:

- orientation to help you understand the course and more about the place you are studying, as well as access to support services that can help you study and adjust to life in Australia
- the education provider's contact officer or officers for overseas students
- what your provider's requirements are for satisfactory attendance
- what your provider's requirements are for satisfactory progress in the courses you study and what support is available if you are not progressing well
- if you can apply for course credit and the circumstances in which your enrolment can be deferred, suspended or cancelled
- a complaints and appeals process.

## **YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS AN OVERSEAS STUDENT IN AUSTRALIA**

As an overseas student on a student visa, you are responsible for:

- complying with your student visa conditions
- ensuring you have and continue to maintain your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for as long as you stay in Australia as a student
- telling your provider if you change your address or other contact details
- meeting the terms of the written agreement with your education provider
- meeting the restriction on transfer between registered providers
- maintaining satisfactory course progress
- maintaining satisfactory attendance where applicable.

For more comprehensive information please read the **ESOS Framework Student Fact Sheet** at the end of this booklet. Another useful source of information for overseas students is the Australian Government website [www.studyinaustralia.gov.au](http://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au)

Information about visa conditions for student visa holders is available on the [Department of Immigration and Border Protection's website](#).

# SECTION 3

## Policies, Procedures and Forms

Overseas student policies and all required forms are available to students and parents/guardian as part of this handbook which is available on the Pittwater House website.

### 8.10 OVERSEAS STUDENT VISA REQUIREMENTS

Guideline Reference 3.11 (NESA Guidelines for Approved NSW School Providers Delivering Courses to Overseas Students April 2018)

As per the Department of Education and Training's (DET) National Code 2018 - Standards 8, the following process documents the requirements for monitoring the attendance of students, course progress and course completion within the expected duration of study.

Where conditions are not met the School will notify Department of Home Affairs (DHA) via PRISMS when:

- a student is not achieving satisfactory course progress or
- the school agrees to extend the duration of the student's study or
- the student not achieving satisfactory course attendance.

#### 8.12.1 Course Attendance

8.12.1.1 Attendance is taken:

- for Years K-6 Attendance is taken once daily during period 1 by the classroom teacher.
- for Years 7-12 attendance is taken every period of the day.
- late arrival at school is recorded and will be included in attendance calculations.
- early departure from school is recorded and will be included in attendance calculations.

8.12.1.2 Where a student is absent from school the parent or guardian should contact the School to advise a reason by 9am on the day of absence.

8.12.1.3 Where the School is not advised of a reason for absence, the parent or guardian will be contacted the morning of the absence by Email and SMS. If no response is received after five days, the absence is followed up by email with the student's parent/s and/or guardian/s. If no response is received after 7 days the absence is confirmed as unjustified as required by the Minister's codes.

8.12.1.4 Absences from school should be accompanied by a medical certificate, an explanatory communication from a parent/guardian or evidence that leave has been approved by the Principal following the schools approved process for Applications for Exemption from school.

8.12.1.5 Any absences longer than 5 consecutive days without approval will be investigated.

- i. Student attendance is overseen by the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator and Overseas Student Administrator to assess compliance in regards to mandatory student attendance.

- ii. The Schools electronic roll will automatically email the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator, Overseas Student Administrator and Deputy Principal to investigate and email the parents/guardians of an overseas student with a warning if an overseas student absence reaches 10% and 15% in any given term.
- iii. If issues affecting the student's ability to attend school are identified, then counselling by the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator, Deputy Principal or School Counsellors may be enacted, as appropriate to the situation.
- iv. Students at risk of not meeting the 80% attendance, or 70% attendance in compassionate or compelling circumstances, are notified by the Overseas Students Administrator in writing and counselled by the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator and/or Head of School.
- v. Where attendance then becomes unsatisfactory, the student and their parent/guardian will be advised in writing of the School's intention to report. The student is advised that they have 20 working days in which to access the School's internal grievance policy and procedure.

8.12.1.6 DHA will be notified via PRISMS of the student not achieving satisfactory course attendance as soon as practicable where:

- i. The student does not access the grievance policy and procedure within 20 days
- ii. The student withdraws from the grievance policy and procedure
- iii. The grievance policy and procedure validates the School's decision to report

8.12.1.7 Students will not be reported for failing to meet the 80% threshold where the student is able to produce documentary evidence clearly demonstrating compassionate or compelling circumstances such as, but not limited to:

- medical illness supported by a medical certificate
- bereavement
- major political upheaval
- traumatic experiences (supported by police or emergency services report, a psychologist's report, or a formal report by a School Counsellor)
- inability to commence because of delay in receiving a visa.

## 8.12.2 Course Progress

8.12.2.1 Students are made aware of assessment requirements in the Internal Assessment Booklets for each senior year available to all students on the School's online portal under School Information, Internal Assessment Booklets.

8.12.2.2 Courses at the school are delivered by teachers at the school. A student in Year 11 and/or 12 may choose to include a course offered at TAFE, Open High School or Saturday Language school. No more than 25% of courses may be studied through external providers.

8.12.2.3 Student progress is continually monitored by the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator.



8.12.2.4 To demonstrate satisfactory course progress a student will need to:

- i. Complete all assessment tasks
- ii. Achieve 'Satisfactory' or above for work habits grades in all courses
- iii. Complete a minimum of 12 units of study in Year 11 and 10 units of study in Year 12.
- iv. Must achieve a pass mark (greater than 50%)

8.12.2.5 Where a student is not satisfactorily progressing in a course, the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator in conjunction with the Deputy Principal will develop an intervention plan which may include but is not limited to the implementation of supervised study, tutoring by school teachers or outside agencies. The Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator will monitor course progress through the following measures:

- Looking at course progress grades and comments each term on either interim or semester reports. All of these are available on Edumate.
- Faculty Co-ordinators and teachers are reminded at least annually in curriculum meetings of the need to inform the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator when a student appears to be at risk, has failed to submit required work or has made an unsatisfactory attempt.

8.12.2.6 Full reports are issued at the conclusion of each semester of study (end of term 2 and term 4) with interim reports available at the end of term 1 and term 3.

8.12.2.7 Where course progress is deemed unsatisfactory students and their guardian/s will be notified in writing with a warning email

8.12.2.8 'N' Award warning letters may also be sent where a Year 9, 10, 11, or 12 student is at risk of not meeting the requirements to gain RoSA or HSC accreditation issued by the Faculty Coordinator relevant to the subject.

8.12.2.9 Where a student's progress does not improve to a satisfactory level by the end of the assessment period (semester) following the issue of a warning, the School will advise the student in writing of its intention to report the student, and that they have 20 working days in which to access lodge an appeal using the schools grievance policy and procedure if they wish to do so.

8.12.2.10 DHA will be notified via PRISMS of the student not achieving satisfactory course attendance as soon as practicable where:

- i. The student does not access the grievance policy and procedure within 20 days
- ii. The student withdraws from the grievance policy and procedure
- iii. The grievance policy and procedure validates the schools decision to report

### **8.12.3 Completion within expected duration of study (Course Progression)**

8.12.3.1 Student progress is continually monitored by the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator.

8.12.3.2 Monitoring of course progress includes tracking that students are reasonably expected to complete the course within the duration as set out in their CoE.

8.12.3.3 If for any reason, the student requests and is granted permission to lengthen the duration of study, the amendment will be reported through PRISMS and if required, a new CoE will be issued.

8.12.3.4 Extensions to the duration of study will only be granted due to:

- i. Compassionate or compelling circumstances
- ii. A school sanctioned intervention strategy per 8.10.2.5 where the strategy will involve work that temporarily inhibits the student's ability to maintain other course work
- iii. Deferment or suspension granted in line with School policy 8.11.

## **8.7.7 APPLICATION TO CHANGE ADDRESS**

If a student wishes to change accommodation they must:

- apply to the school for approval using the schools Application to Change Address form and include the required supporting documents
- attend a meeting with the Overseas Students Welfare Coordinator to discuss the request and see if the problem can be resolved without relocation
- If the request is approved the school will advise Oz Homestay it has approved the students request to relocate
- The student must ensure that the Homestay family is informed a minimum two weeks in advance of the move. If two full weeks notice is not given, the family must still be paid for this two week period.
- The student is responsible for any additional costs incurred to facilitate a change of accommodation.



# Application to Change Address

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Year/Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Commencement at Pittwater House: \_\_\_\_\_

Student has lived at this location for: \_\_\_\_\_

Years: \_\_\_\_\_

Months: \_\_\_\_\_

Days: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for the request to change address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Acknowledgement of Request  
by Student:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Acknowledgement of Request  
by Homestay/Guardian:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Requests will not be processed without the following documents:**

*(School use only)*

Permission to change address granted by Parent

Received on: \_\_\_\_\_

Request to change address noted by the current homestay/guardian

Received on: \_\_\_\_\_

Acknowledgement that the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator has met with the student and approves the student proceeding to seek a new residence

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**This application will only be assessed after all relevant documentation has been received.**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Approval by the School (School use only)**

Permission to proceed:

Granted

Rejected

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant advised outcome:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Oz Homestay Advised to proceed:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

New Homestay Approved:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

New Homestay Details Received:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Relocation Date:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Database updated:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

PRISMS updated:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

BOS updated:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Before completing this form please read Overseas Student Procedure 8.7.7 available in the Overseas Student Handbook on [www.pittwaterhouse.com.au](http://www.pittwaterhouse.com.au)**

## 8.9 OVERSEAS STUDENT TRANSFERS

### Guideline Reference 3.10 (NESA Guidelines for Approved NSW School Providers Delivering Courses to Overseas Students April 2018)

As mandated by the ESOS Act, overseas students may not transfer from their first registered school sector course before completing the first six months of study, except in the following circumstances:

- a. The original registered provider has ceased to be registered or the course the student is undertaking has ceased to be registered
- b. The original registered provider has provided a written letter of release
- c. The original registered provider has had a sanction imposed on its registration by the Australian Government or similar that prevents the student from continuing his or her principal course
- d. The School considers the change to be in the student's best interests and provides written support of the change.

#### 8.12.4 Application for transfer to another registered provider

8.12.4.1 If there has been less than six months participation in the principal course there will be no transfer considered unless one of the above circumstances or other extenuating personal circumstances exist.

All students wishing to transfer to another education provider must apply for a letter of release using the School's Request for Release form in the Overseas Student Handbook.

8.12.4.2 All applications must be accompanied by:

8.12.4.2.1 Proof of the parent/s support for the transfer in the form of a letter, fax or email of a scanned document bearing the parent/s signature. For purposes of transfer, the signature of the student's temporary Australian guardian will not be deemed suitable authorisation to process a request for transfer.

8.12.4.2.2 A valid enrolment offer from another registered provider and acknowledgement that the new provider will accept responsibility for approving the student's accommodation, support, and general welfare arrangements as outlined in Standard 5 of the National Code 2018.

8.12.5 Evidence that the student is always in DHA approved welfare and accommodation arrangements

#### 8.12.6 Application for transfer from another registered provider

8.12.6.1 No student transfers will be considered until a formal enrolment application is made and the student meets the entry requirements. In addition, written evidence outlining the reason or permission for the transfer must be provided.

8.12.6.2 The transfer will not be accepted until all enrolment fees and deposit have been paid. If the transfer is accepted and then the student decides not to pursue an enrolment at the School, the School's refund policy will apply.

8.12.6.3 Unless there are special circumstances as those outlined in this policy no transfer will be accepted if the student has not completed six months of his/her principal course.

8.12.6.4 All applications must be accompanied by:

- 8.12.6.4.1 Proof of the parent/s support for the transfer in the form of a letter, fax or email of a scanned document bearing the parent/s signature. For purposes of transfer, the signature of the student's temporary Australian guardian will not be deemed suitable authorisation to process a request for transfer.
- 8.12.6.4.2 A letter of release from the registered provider from which the student is transferring
- 8.12.6.4.3 If the student is under 18, a CAAW from the registered provider from which the student is transferring to advise the date up to which the previous education provider accepts responsibility for the students living arrangements and general welfare.

### **8.12.7 Assessment Period**

- All applications for transfer will be considered within 10 working days during school terms and the applicant notified of the decision.
- The processing of transfers applied for during periods of school recess will be delayed until the required staff return to work.

### **8.12.8 Grant of a letter of release**

A letter of release will only be granted in the first six months where:

- An approved change to the student's welfare and accommodation arrangements results in a distance of travel which the school agrees is unreasonable.
- It has been agreed by the School that it is in the best interest of the student to transfer to a course not offered by Pittwater House.
- The student is unable to achieve satisfactory course progress at the level they are studying even after engaging with the Schools invention policy to assist the student.
- There is evidence of compassionate or compelling reasons.
- The School fails to deliver the course as outlined in the written agreement.
- There is evidence that the student's reasonable expectations about their current course are not being met.

### **8.12.9 Refusal of a letter of release**

A letter of release will NOT be granted in the first six months where:

- The school is of the opinion that the student's academic progress is likely to be disadvantaged
- After investigation, the school is of the opinion that the student has requested a transfer under the adverse influence of another party
- If the student is under 18 there is no evidence that the transfer is supported by their parent or legal guardian

### **8.12.10 Appeals**

Students who have had an application refused may appeal the decision using the Pittwater House Grievance Policy and Procedures.

### **8.12.11 Reporting**

All transfer outcomes will be reported in PRISMS and on the student file maintained by the School.



# Request for Release

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Year/Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Commencement at Pittwater House: \_\_\_\_\_

Student has been enrolled in this course for:     a period longer than 6 months     Less than 6 months

Proposed transfer date: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed New School: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Transfer: \_\_\_\_\_

**Requests will not be processed without the following documents:**

*(School use only)*

Permission to transfer granted by Parent

Received

Valid enrolment offer from the receiving school

Received

Confirmation that new school accepts responsibility for accommodation, support and welfare from:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Received

Evidence the student will remain in approved welfare and accommodation arrangements (CAAW from receiving school)

Received

**This application will only be assessed after all relevant documentation has been received.**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Acknowledgement of Request by Student:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Acknowledgement of Request by Homestay/Guardian:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Approval by the School**

*(School use only)*

Executive Level Approval:

Request Granted     Request Rejected    Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant advised outcome:

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

PRISMS updated:

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Database updated:

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

BOS updated:

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Before completing this form please read Overseas Student Procedure 8.11 available in the Overseas Student Handbook on [www.pittwaterhouse.com.au](http://www.pittwaterhouse.com.au)**

## **8.11 DEFERGING, SUSPENDING OR CANCELLING THE OVERSEAS STUDENT'S ENROLMENT**

**Guideline Reference 3.10 (NESA Guidelines for Approved NSW School Providers Delivering Courses to Overseas Students April 2018)**

The School may only enable students to defer or temporarily suspend their studies, including granting a leave of absence, during the course through formal agreement in certain limited circumstances.

Students may, through formal agreement, be given permission to defer commencement, take a leave of absence or temporarily suspend their studies during the course. Such absences, however, may affect the student's visa status. The registered provider may also seek to cancel the student's enrolment.

Overseas students are informed that any deferment, suspension or cancellation of enrolment may affect their student visa and if subject to any of these events they should contact the Department of Home Affairs for advice.

### **8.12.12 Notification of Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment**

#### **8.12.12.1** Where the school undertakes to suspend or cancel an enrolment

- the reasons for the action will be documented and a written notification will be sent to the student and parent/guardian.
- the student and parent/guardian will be advised they have 20 working days to appeal using the Pittwater House grievance procedure.
- the school commits to maintain the enrolment whilst the appeal is considered.

#### **8.12.12.2** Students, parents and guardians are invited to review and have access to the Student Handbook which outlines the expectations the School has of students. This document is available on the School Information tab on the School's website portal.

Lack of knowledge will not be accepted as defence where the suspension or cancellation of enrolment is due to a breach of required student conduct.

#### **8.12.12.3** Where a deferment, suspension or cancellation is initiated by a student or their parent/guardian it must notify the school in writing 30 days before the enrolment is to commence, addressed to the Principal and be accompanied by documents and/or evidence supporting the request.

#### **8.12.12.4** Compassionate or compelling circumstances which would substantiate deferment, or suspension of enrolment include but are not limited to:

- Medical illness supported by a medical certificate
- Bereavement of family or in some cases close friends
- Major events, such as a natural disaster and major political upheaval
- Traumatic experiences (supported by police or emergency services report, a psychologist's report, or a formal report by one of the School's Counsellors)

### **8.12.13 Assessment**

- All requests for deferment, suspension or cancellation will be considered within 10 working days during school terms and the applicant notified of the decision.
- The processing of deferments, suspensions or cancellations applied for during periods of school recess will be delayed until the required staff return to work.

- The final decision for assessing and granting transfers, suspensions or cancellation of enrolment lies with the Principal.

#### 8.12.14 Appeals

Students who have had a request for deferment, suspension or cancellation denied may appeal the decision using the Pittwater House Grievance Policy and Procedures available via the website portal.

#### 8.12.15 Records

- Transfers, suspensions and cancellations of enrolment will be recorded in PRISMS, following decisions made including any appeal made using the Pittwater House Grievance Policy and Procedures and if required, a new CoE will be issued.

Copies of all documents pertaining to the request for, assessment of, grant or refusal of and final processing of transfers, suspensions and cancellations of enrolment will be maintained in the student file.

## REFUNDS AND CANCELLATIONS OF ENROLMENT

### 8.4.1 Refunds and Cancellation of Enrolment

The following procedures are in accordance with The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (The National Code 2018).

- i. The \$500 Enrolment Fee is not refundable.
- ii. All other fees paid will be fully refunded if the student fails to meet the required English levels or fails to be issued with a student visa to study at the School and produces documentary evidence to that effect from the Australian immigration authorities. This refund is payable within 28 days of receipt of written application.
- iii. Where written notification of cancellation of the enrolment is received by the School prior to commencement of the program the following policy applies:
  - a. Cancellation 10 weeks or more prior to commencement: Enrolment Fee + 15% of first year's tuition fee to be retained by the School.
  - b. Cancellation within 10 weeks prior to commencement: Enrolment Fee + 35% of first year's tuition fee to be retained by the School.
  - c. Cancellation after commencement date - no refund.
- iv. Ongoing enrolments: Where written notification of cancellation of the enrolment for a subsequent year of schooling is received by the School prior to commencement of the program for that year the following policy applies:
  - a. Cancellation 14 weeks or more prior to commencement: no tuition fee to be paid to the School.
  - b. Cancellation within 14 weeks prior to commencement of the study period for that year: 35% of the year's tuition fee is payable to the School.
  - c. Cancellation after commencement date: full years tuition is payable to the School.
- v. Where a refund is given and a commission to an Agent has been paid the amount of commission will be deducted from the refund.



- vi. Full refunds (including the Enrolment Fee, Student Services Fee and Tuition Fees paid) will be made if the School fails to commence the course of study for which the student has applied.
- vii. If the School is for any reason unable to fully deliver the course The Tuition Protection Service (TPS), an initiative of the Australian Government, will assist the Overseas student to complete their studies in another course or with another education provider or receive a refund of their unspent tuition fees. For information on the TPS, please see: <https://tps.gov.au/StaticContent/Get/StudentInformation> \*Calculation of the refund due in this case is prescribed by a legislative instrument (s.7 of Education Services for Overseas Students (Calculation of Refund) Specification 2014). <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2014L00907>
- viii. There are no refunds for pre-paid extra services where the School has forwarded payment to other service providers. School uniform items may be returned if not worn and with proof of date of purchase.
- ix. Any applicable refunds will be made directly to the payer.
- x. Dispute resolution processes do not circumscribe the student's right to take further action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

## **6.7 STUDENT AND PARENT GRIEVANCE POLICY (PROCESS OF APPEAL)**

### **Introduction**

Pittwater House values the feedback it receives from parents and the community. Responding to both affirmative and negative feedback demonstrates the School's commitment to open communication with the School Community and the community at large. Complaints about any aspect of the School's operations, service or personnel will be handled responsively, openly and in a timely manner, with the aim of resolving any complaint via an articulated process and respecting the confidential nature of such matters. Complaints are treated as constructive suggestions which may be used to improve standards and may prevent cause for further complaint.

The School commits to respond to any complaint or appeal the overseas student makes regarding his or her dealings with the School, education agents the School has formal agreements with or any related party the School has an arrangement with to deliver the overseas student's course or related services.

### **Purpose**

This policy is designed to:

- improve the level of stakeholder satisfaction with the School
- recognise, promote and protect stakeholders' rights, including the right to comment and complain
- provide an efficient, fair and accessible mechanism for resolving complaints in accordance with the principles of natural justice
- ensure that the complaint handling process is transparent and comprehensive.

### **Principles**

Responsiveness. Complaints need to be resolved openly and responsibly. It is expected that all complaints will be acknowledged and resolved in a timely manner. The process and timeframes for resolution will vary depending on the nature, complexity and timing of the issue.

### **Fairness**

The process needs to be fair to both the complainant and the person/s against whom the complaint is being made. All parties must be protected from victimisation, discrimination or retribution. The process is to be based on the principles of natural justice, including the complainant's right to:

- be heard
- have their complaint treated seriously
- be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings

- be informed of the processes of complaints handling
- be able to formally present his or her case at minimal or no cost
- be informed of the School's decision and detailed reasons for that decision in writing

The person or section of the School about whom the complaint is made shall have the right to:

- be advised of the identity of the complainant and the complaint
- collect sufficient detail to enable them to gather information and prepare a response to the complaint
- have the opportunity to respond to the person investigating the complaint and have the response taken seriously at no cost
- be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings
- be informed of the processes engaged in the complaints handling
- be informed of the decision and reason for the decision in writing.

It is important that those handling complaints should be independent of the issue of the complaint. If a conflict of interest arises for the staff member involved in the receipt or management of a complaint, the appropriate Head of School will arrange for an independent staff member to continue with the process and hear the complaint. If the complaint involves a Head of School, they will inform the Principal. If the complaint involves the Principal, she will inform the Chairperson of the School's Board of Governors.

### **Confidentiality**

To protect confidentiality and privacy, staff involved in handling complaints resolution must ensure that information is restricted only to those who genuinely need to know in order to deal with the complaint. Some information about the specific complaint may need to be disclosed to others during its resolution. The complainant needs to be informed of this.

### **Processes**

It is important that the initial process of handling complaints is supportive and utilises positive conflict resolution skills. Each complaint should be treated on the information available and actions that are appropriate to the individual complaint. Anonymous complaints will not be recognised or dealt with under this policy.

### **Procedures for Raising a Concern or Making a Complaint**

Pittwater House School acknowledges that concerns and issues exist that may be resolved informally without the need to follow a formal complaints process. In such cases complainants are encouraged initially to raise issues or concerns informally with the relevant person at the time of the issue arising. Discussing the issue or concern immediately and face-to-face may clarify the situation and resolve any misunderstandings satisfactorily. The process for raising complaints is set out below:

### **Outline of Complaint Procedures**

- Any complaint should be first raised informally with the person concerned.
- If the matter is not resolved then complainants should approach their Form Teachers or the School Counsellors.
- In the event that this does not resolve the issue, the complainant should then contact the relevant senior staff member, in the case of academic matters then the Faculty Co-ordinator, co-curricular matters with the Co-ordinator of Creative Arts (for performing arts matters) or the Heads of Co-curricular (for all sporting & co-curricular matters).
- If there is still a concern then the person making the complaint should approach the Head of School for pastoral matters or the Deputy Principal for academic matters.
- If the complaint is against the Principal then the complaint should be put in writing and addressed to the Chairperson of the School's Board of Governors.

Complaints received by members of the School's Board of Governors must be referred to the Chairperson, who will discuss the matter/s with the Principal. Positive resolution of a complaint should aim to:

- seek resolution at the level at which the complaint is made
- gain agreement of the parties

- consider all relevant information and views of all parties
- consider the School's policies

The management of complaints resolution needs to reflect the following:

- Complainants should be told the process for complaint resolution and an indication of how long it will take to deal with a complaint
- Complainants should be kept informed of progress on resolving the complaint where relevant
- It is expected that written complaints will be acknowledged within 7 days of receipt. The proposed timeframe required to resolve the complaint should be indicated to the complainant as early as possible in the process and may vary according to the nature, complexity or timing of the complaint.
- If the complainant is unsuccessful in the School's internal complaints handling and appeals process, the School will advise the student within 10 working days (during School term) of concluding the internal review of the overseas student's right to access an external complaints handling and appeals process at minimal or no cost.
- If the internal or external complaints handling or appeal process results in a decision or recommendation in favour of the overseas student, the School will immediately implement the decision or recommendation and/or take the preventive or corrective action required and advise the student of that action

### **Overseas student Complaints against Planned Actions (Appeals)**

General complaints should be first raised informally with the Overseas Students Welfare Co-ordinator as per the **Outline of Complaint Procedures**. Where a complaint regards a planned action of the school including but not limited to cancellation of enrolment due to a notice of Intention to Report due to Unsatisfactory Attendance or a notice of Intention to Report due to Unsatisfactory Course Progress:

- the School commits to maintain the enrolment whilst the complaint is considered.
- the complaint must be lodged within the timeframe for appeal which will be detailed in the original notice or letter advising of the School's planned action against which the complaint is being made.

Where the outcome of a complaint against planned action is unsatisfactory to the complainant, an appeal may be presented to the Overseas Students Ombudsman NSW. Any costs associated will be the responsibility of Pittwater House. This policy does not take away the complainant's rights to take further action under Australia's consumer protection laws. For more information go to [www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au).

### **Record Keeping**

All complaints which cannot be resolved informally will be confidentially recorded by the staff member handling the complaint and kept on the relevant file/s. Details should include:

- The nature of the complaint
- Dates and names of parties concerned
- Staff members involved in handling the complaint
- Action taken and outcomes

# Conditions of Enrolment

## 1. Contract

The offer by The Pittwater House Schools Ltd (the School) to reserve a place for the student and the payment of fees to secure that place creates a binding contract between the applicant and the School.

## 2. Expectations

Students enrolled at the School are expected to be motivated to high achievement, to wear the uniform with pride, to be well groomed, to wear a conservative hair style, to participate fully in the life of the School, to attend classes regularly and punctually and to conform to the discipline policy of the School.

## 3. Fees and Charges

All fees and charges are payable in Australian Dollars (AUD\$) prior to commencement of the program in accordance with the Tuition and Student Services Fees for Overseas Students published on [www.pittwaterhouse.com.au](http://www.pittwaterhouse.com.au). Fees quoted on the Provisional Letter of Offer and Acceptance Agreement are current at the time of offer, therefore they are an indication only of the amount due. Note that fees often increase at the beginning of each calendar year. Payment of fees to secure a place for a student will be credited to the families School account and invoices will be issued with the correct rate at the time of commencement. Family discounts on tuition fees apply whilst two or more siblings are enrolled at the School. Discounts are as follows: second child 2.5%, third child 5%, fourth child and subsequent children 10% discount.

## 4. Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)

'Confirmation of Enrolment' will be issued after the fees outlined on the Acceptance Agreement have been paid.

## 5. Refunds and Cancellations of Enrolment

The following procedures are in accordance with The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (The National Code 2018).

- i. The \$500 Enrolment Fee is not refundable.
- ii. All other fees paid will be fully refunded if the student fails to meet the required English levels or fails to be issued with a student visa to study at the School and produces documentary evidence to that effect from the Australian immigration authorities. This refund is payable within 28 days of receipt of written application.
- iii. Where written notification of cancellation of the enrolment is received by the School prior to commencement of the program the following policy applies:
  - a. Cancellation 10 weeks or more prior to commencement: Enrolment Fee + 15% of first year's tuition fee to be retained by the School.
  - b. Cancellation within 10 weeks prior to commencement: Enrolment Fee + 35% of first year's tuition fee to be retained by the School.
  - c. Cancellation after commencement date - no refund.
- iv. Ongoing enrolments: Where written notification of cancellation of the enrolment for a subsequent year of schooling is received by the School prior to commencement of the program for that year the following policy applies:
  - a. Cancellation 14 weeks or more prior to commencement: no tuition fee to be paid to the School.
  - b. Cancellation within 14 weeks prior to commencement of the study period for that year: 35% of the year's tuition fee is payable to the School.
  - c. Cancellation after commencement date: full years tuition is payable to the School.
- v. Where a refund is given and a commission to an Agent has been paid the amount of commission will be deducted from the refund.
- vi. Full refunds (including the Enrolment Fee, Student Services Fee and Tuition Fees paid) will be made if the School fails to commence the course of study for which the student has applied.
- vii. If the School is for any reason unable to fully deliver the course The Tuition Protection Service (TPS), an initiative of the Australian Government, will assist the Overseas student to complete their studies in another course or with another education provider or receive a refund of their unspent tuition fees. For information on the TPS, please see: <https://tps.gov.au/StaticContent/Get/StudentInformation> \*Calculation of the refund due in this case is prescribed by a legislative instrument (s.7 of Education Services for Overseas Students (Calculation of Refund) Specification 2014). <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2014L00907>
- viii. There are no refunds for pre-paid extra services where the School has forwarded payment to other service providers. School uniform items may be returned if not worn and with proof of date of purchase.
- ix. Any applicable refunds will be made directly to the payer.
- x. Dispute resolution processes do not circumscribe the student's right to take further action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

## 6. Enrolment, Suspension and Expulsion

- i. In line with Federal Government rulings a student must stay with their initial course provider for at least 6 months.
- ii. The student will attend punctually all lessons, classes and examinations and submit all assessment tasks for the courses in which the student is enrolled.
- iii. Australian education regulations apply regarding student attendance.
- iv. The student will abide by the rules and regulations (as defined in the Overseas Student Handbook) at all times.

- v. The Principal (or their delegate) reserves the right to suspend or expel any student who fails to meet (without good reason) the requirements of Clause 6 OR whose acceptance to the School was based on false documentation OR non-disclosure of past bad behavior or criminal record.
- vi. Where circumstances permit the School will inform the student, parent and / or guardian that the student is in danger of suspension / expulsion so as to allow the student the opportunity to make good.
- vii. In the event that a student is expelled any refund is entirely at the discretion of the School.

## 7. Complaints and Appeals Policy

- i. In the event of a dispute between an individual student and the School relating to the code of conduct, attendance, quality of service or teaching, or the payment or refund of fees, procedures to facilitate the resolution of the dispute are outlined in the Overseas Student Handbook.
- ii. The School's dispute resolution processes do not circumscribe the student's right to pursue other legal remedies. For details refer to The National Code 2018.

## 8. Guardianship

- i. All students must have a guardian who is over 21 years of age, resident of Sydney and who is readily accessible to the School at all times. If your family does not have a suitable person willing to act as guardian then the School can arrange this service.
- ii. Where students are being placed in a homestay arrangement the homestay parents will also be screened and approved as the student's guardian.
- iii. Agents will not be approved as a Guardian or emergency contact for any overseas student.

## 9. Accommodation

- i. Students may elect to stay with legal family members (proof of relationship through the provision of birth certificates and legal documentation may be requested) or a homestay family approved by the School's appointed homestay provider, Oz Homestay ([www.ozhomestay.com.au](http://www.ozhomestay.com.au)). Homestay is available for students entering Years 9, 10 and 11 only.
- ii. The School will not permit students to provide for themselves regardless of age. All students, including those who are 18 years or over, are required by the School to reside with an approved Guardian or Homestay Parent whilst attending the School.
- iii. All Homestay accommodation providers will be subject to an inspection by Oz Homestay every 6 months on behalf of the School at the student's expense.
- iv. Agents will not be approved as a Homestay Parent or Guardian for any overseas student.

## 10. Entry Requirements

- i. For entry into any program the student must have completed the relevant studies overseas.
- ii. Students will not be accepted if the age on graduation of the Year 12 Higher School Certificate will be greater than 20 years.
- iii. Students must submit an Overseas Application for Enrolment form along with the required documentation as stated on the Overseas Application Checklist.
- iv. Students will not be admitted unless the required English level or higher as stated below has been achieved:-
  - Year 9, 10 and 11 - Upper Intermediate (AEAS 61-70 or IELTS 5.5)
  - Year 7 and 8 - Intermediate (AEAS 46-60)
  - Year 2 to Year 6 - Pre-Intermediate (AEAS 36-45)
  - ECC, Kindergarten and Year 1 - at the discretion of the School
- v. Where a student is undertaking an English course in Australia to acquire the language skills necessary prior to attending the School, proof of graduation or successful completion of the English course must be produced prior to commencement of studies at the School. If the required level is not achieved the student's enrolment will be deferred or cancelled. Deferment of an application is at the discretion of the Pittwater House Admissions Board. Students entering Year 11 are unable to be deferred and their application will be cancelled. Where an English course is required prior to commencing study at the School, enrolment with one of our preferred providers will be looked upon favourably by the Pittwater House Admissions Board. A list of our preferred English Colleges can be found on our website.

## 11. Pre-requisites

Note carefully that certain courses require previous study. The School requires evidence such as school reports to ensure students have completed the required number of years prior to entry in a year or course. Note there are minimum levels of English proficiency required for most courses.

## 12. Attendance

Overseas students on a student visa must not be absent for more than 20% of the course program. The National Code 2018 requires the School to calculate attendance rates continuously.

## 13. Medical Consent

In circumstances where the student requires urgent medical attention and it is not possible to communicate with the parent / guardian the School is authorised to arrange appropriate medical treatment in accordance with the advice of qualified medical practitioners.

#### **14. Variation to Terms of Contract**

Any variations to the terms and conditions of this contract must be in writing and signed by an authorised officer of the School.

#### **15. Privacy Statement**

- i. The School collects personal information, including sensitive information about students and parents or guardians before and during the course of a student's enrolment at the School. The primary purpose of collecting this information is to enable the School to provide schooling for your child.
- ii. Some of the information we collect is to satisfy the School's legal obligations, particularly to enable the School to discharge its duty of care.
- iii. Certain laws governing or relating to the operation of schools require that certain information is collected. These include Public Health and Child Protection laws and the Tuition Protection Service for overseas students.
- iv. Health information about students is sensitive information within the terms of the National Privacy Principles under the Privacy Act. We require medical reports about students from time to time. If you do not consent to us obtaining this information you must advise us.
- v. From time to time the School discloses personal and sensitive information to others (sports coaches, other schools, government departments, state agencies, medical practitioners and people providing services to the School, including specialist visiting teachers, music tutors and volunteers). Information will only be disclosed to maintain the safety and well-being of the student or for mandatory reporting requirements.
- vi. If we do not obtain the information referred to above we may not be able to enrol or continue the enrolment of the student.
- vii. Personal information collected from students is regularly disclosed to their parents or guardians. On occasions personal and group achievements, results and contributions are published in the School newsletters, magazines and the website.
- viii. Parents may seek access to personal information collected about them and their child by contacting the School. Students may also seek access to personal information about them. However, there will be occasions when access is denied. Such occasions would include where access would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of others, where access may result in a breach of the School's duty of care to the students or where students have provided information in confidence.
- ix. As you may know the School from time to time engages in fundraising activities. The information received from you may be used to make an appeal to you. The School will not disclose the personal information collected to third parties for their own marketing purposes without your consent.
- x. If you provide the School with the personal information of others, such as doctors or emergency contacts, you should inform them that you are disclosing that information to the School and why, and that they can access that information if they wish and that the School does not usually disclose the information to third parties.

#### **16. Notification of change of address**

- i. Whilst in Australia and studying with the School, overseas students are required to notify the School of their residential address in Australia, mobile number, email address and who to contact in emergency situations within 7 days of arriving in Australia. If any of the above details change the student is required to notify the School within 7 days of the change.
- ii. Overseas students must apply to the School using the appropriate form if they intend to change their residential address. This form is included in the Overseas Student Handbook available on [www.pittwaterhouse.com.au](http://www.pittwaterhouse.com.au).
- iii. Students may not move residence until after the application has been approved and all required checks have been completed by Oz Homestay on behalf of the School. When a request is made to change residence all costs associated with checks completed by Oz Homestay are the responsibility of the student and will be billed directly to their account.

#### **17. Parent / Guardian Agreement and Indemnity**

I understand and accept the Conditions of Enrolment at The Pittwater House Schools Ltd. I further agree to give permission for my child to attend and participate in activities organised by the School. I understand that every reasonable care will be taken of my child but in the event of any accident occurring I shall not hold the School responsible or any other person liable, except where negligence on the part of any employee of the School is proven in a court of law in Australia.

#### **18. Right of Action**

This agreement, and the availability of complaints and appeals processes, does not remove the right of the student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

# Glossary

## **CRICOS**

Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (Federal Government body). This government body keeps a register of education providers and the courses they offer to overseas students.

## **DET**

Department of Education and Training (Federal Government body)

## **DHA**

Department of Home Affairs (Federal Government body). This department incorporates Australia's federal law enforcement, national and transport security, criminal justice, emergency management, multicultural affairs and immigration and border-related functions and agencies.

## **DIBP**

Department of Immigration and Border Protection (Federal Government body) falls within the portfolio the Department of Home Affairs as from December 2017.

## **ESOS Act**

Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000. Federal legislation (law) governing regulations around overseas students and delivery of courses to those students by providers registered on the CRICOS

## **National Code 2018**

National code of practice for provider of education and training to overseas students is a legislative instrument made under the ESOS Act which sets nationally consistent standards that govern the protection of overseas students and delivery of courses to those students by providers register on the CRICOS. Latest edition is 2018.

## **NESA**

NSW Educations Standards Authority (State Government body). Previously known as the Board of Studies (BOS)

## **TPS**

Tuition Protection Service. An initiative of the Australian Government to assist overseas students whose education providers are unable to fully deliver their course of study. The TPS ensures that overseas students can either complete their studies in another course/with another education provider or receive a refund of their unspent tuition fees.

# Additional Factsheets

Please see the following fact sheets provided for your information.



# 27

EVERYONE CAN BE A LIFESAVER



**Royal Life Saving**  
ROYAL LIFE SAVING SOCIETY - AUSTRALIA

FACT SHEET No.27

# Beach Safety



## Q. How safe are Australian beaches?

A. Going to the beach is a popular pastime in Australia, but it can be a dangerous place. On average, one person has drowned every week at an Australian beach for the last 5 years and on average 10 people are rescued every day. International tourists and those who are unfamiliar with the beach are at a greater risk of drowning.

## Q. What hazards are there at Australian beaches?

A. There are a number of dangers at Australian beaches. These include: rips, tidal and runback currents, waves, drop offs, sand bars, marine stingers, submerged objects, other people and surf craft.

## Q. What is a rip and how do I recognise one?

A. Rips are one of the most common hazards at Australian beaches. Rips are fast-flowing currents where the water flows out in the direction that causes the least resistance. Recognising a rip is the first step in being able to avoid being caught in one. To recognise a rip look for discoloured water, brown in colour due to sand being stirred from the bottom, foam on the surface that extends beyond the breaking waves, a ripple appearance when the water around is generally calm, debris floating with the current and waves breaking larger and further out on both sides of the rip.

## Q. What do I do if I'm caught in a rip?

A. If you are caught in a rip, do not panic, remain calm. If you are a poor or non-swimmer then you should go with the rip, float and wave and wait to be rescued. If you are a weak or tired swimmer then you should swim parallel to the shore and then return to shore when conditions allow. If you are a strong swimmer you should either swim parallel to the shore or angle your body diagonally across the current, returning to the shore through the breaking waves.

## Q. What can I do to keep myself safe at the beach?

A. When at the beach you should always swim between the red and yellow flags. Never swim at unpatrolled beaches and never swim alone. If you do get into trouble, don't panic, float and wave and wait to be rescued. Be aware of your limitations and evaluate your skills and fitness at a safe environment such as a public pool prior to swimming at the beach, to make sure you're physically capable of swimming in the surf. Refrain from drinking alcohol before swimming and never swim at night.

## Q. I'm worried about being stung at the beach, what do I do?

A. To keep yourself safe, wearing a stinger suit (neck to ankles) or a rash vest, swim in areas which are surrounded by stinger nets, heed warning signs, swim at patrolled beaches, use caution entering the water, avoid swimming at beaches during stinger season if possible (usually September to May) and supervise children as they are more vulnerable to stings.

ROYAL LIFE SAVING HAS DEVELOPED A NUMBER OF FACT SHEETS ON WATER SAFETY ISSUES IN AUSTRALIA.

Contact Royal Life Saving on: **1300 737 763**  
or download them from: **www.keepwatch.com.au**

## Beach Safety Checklist:

- Always swim at patrolled beaches
- Always actively supervise children within arms' reach at the beach
- Read beach safety signs on arrival at the beach
- Ask the lifeguard for advice about beach conditions
- Always swim between the red and yellow flags
- Always swim with another person – never swim alone
- Do not enter the water if there are doubts about the ability to cope with the conditions
- Beware of digging deep sand holes – the sides can become unstable and collapse
- If swimming at an area where crocodiles may be present, please look for signage and only swim in designated safe swimming areas. If there is no sign, do not swim in the area
- Protect yourself from the sun and stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water

**ALWAYS SWIM  
BETWEEN THE FLAGS AT  
PATROLLED BEACHES**

Proudly Supported by



**Australian Government**



# International education: ensuring quality and protecting students

## Australia welcomes international students

The Australian Government wants international students to have a rewarding and enjoyable experience when they come to Australia to study. Australia offers high quality education services and protects the rights of international students to ensure you make the most of your time here.

This fact sheet contains important information for student visa holders about living and studying in Australia, including your consumer rights and responsibilities as an international student and key things you should know before and during your study.

### Australian laws protect international students

As a student on a student visa, you benefit from Australian laws that ensure high standards of education, facilities and support services while you are in Australia. You also have rights to information about your course and the institution you wish to study with before and during your enrolment. The Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) framework offers you financial protection in case your education institution does not deliver what it has promised you.

You can find out more about the framework at <https://internationaleducation.gov.au/regulatory-information/pages/regulatoryinformation.aspx>.

## Before you begin your studies

### Choosing a course to study

As an international student, you can only study a course with an education institution listed on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS). All institutions registered on CRICOS have met the quality standards set out in Australian law, which ensures you receive the best possible education services.

CRICOS is a good place to start when you want to find a course or education institution to study with, and can be found at <http://cricos.education.gov.au>.

## Using an education agent

International students **do not** have to use an education agent. You can enrol directly with an Australian education institution. Information about what education institutions offer is usually on their websites.

If you want to use an education agent, it's best to pick one used by the institution you want to study at. You can find a list of education agents on the institution's website.

The law requires institutions to use only education agents that act honestly and with integrity. Agents must give you accurate advice about the courses on offer, including entry requirements, and information about living in Australia. You should still be careful and alert when dealing with agents to ensure you enrol in a course that is suitable for you and will help you achieve your learning goals.

In Australia, education agents cannot give you information on visa and immigration matters – only migration agents can do this. You can find out more about using migration agents at the Department of Immigration and Border Protection's website at [www.border.gov.au/Trav/Visa/Usin](http://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Visa/Usin).

If you think your education agent might be behaving dishonestly or unethically, you should stop using them immediately and contact your education institution directly.

## Written agreements or contracts between the student and institution

Under Australian law an education institution must have a written agreement with you outlining the services they will provide, all the fees you are required to pay, and conditions for refunds of money you pay for the course.

The written agreement is a legal contract. You should read it carefully and make sure you fully understand what it says before signing it. You and your education institution must follow whatever is set out in the written agreement once you have accepted it, so you should keep a copy of it. Should you ever make a complaint about your institution, you will need to refer to your written agreement. You can find out more about making complaints on page 6 of this fact sheet, **Making complaints and getting help**.

### Your rights before you enrol

Even before you enrol with an education institution, under Australian law you have the right to:

- receive current and accurate information about the courses, entry requirements, all fees and modes of study from your institution and your institution's agent before you enrol
- sign a written agreement with your institution before or at the time you pay fees. You do not have to pay the institution any money or fees until you accept the agreement
- seek a refund in certain situations for course money you have paid. Information about refund arrangements must be included in your written agreement
- get the education you paid for. The law includes tuition protections that will allow you to be placed in another course or receive a refund if your institution is unable to teach your course (known as a provider default), visit <https://tps.gov.au/> for more information
- access complaints and appeals processes
- request to transfer to another institution and have that request assessed by your institution.

## **Paying your tuition fees**

From 14 December 2015, changes to Australian law give international students more choice about how they pay their fees. Previously you could not pay more than 50 per cent of your fees before you started a course. Now you can **choose** to pay more than 50 per cent of your tuition fees before you start. For example, you or the person who is paying your fees may decide this is a good idea if the Australian dollar exchange rates mean you will save money by paying more of your fees early.

Your education institution may ask you if you would like to pay more than 50 per cent of your fees before you start your course. This is your choice. Your institution cannot require you to pay more, unless you are doing a short course of 25 weeks or less. If your course is longer than 25 weeks, you cannot be asked to pay more than 50 per cent of your tuition fees before you start.

Your institution may wish to organise a payment plan so you can start regularly paying the rest of your tuition fees once you start the course. Your written agreement should include an itemised list of all the fees you will be charged for your course, including your tuition fees and how they will be paid, and refund arrangements.

In Australia there are also very strong protections for students' fees, which you can learn more about on **page 5** of this fact sheet under **Protecting your tuition fees**.

## **What happens if you can't start the course because your visa is refused?**

If you have paid fees to an education institution and your visa is refused, you are entitled to a refund. Under Australian law, the institution is allowed to keep either 5 per cent of the tuition fees you paid or \$500, whichever is the lowest amount, and must refund you the rest.

If your visa is refused after the course was due to start, the institution can keep tuition fees for the number of weeks that have passed since commencement, and must refund you the rest of the fees.

## **What happens if you decide you don't want to start or continue the course?**

If you change your mind and do not want to start the course, you may be entitled to a refund.

If you have a written agreement with the institution, the amount of your refund will depend on the written agreement, which should tell you what will or will not be repaid to you.

If you do not have a written agreement, you have the right to receive some of your fees back. Under Australian law, the institution is allowed to keep either 5 per cent of the fees you paid or \$500, whichever is the lowest amount, and must refund you the rest of the tuition fees you paid them.

## **During your studies**

### **Support services for you in Australia**

Under Australian law your education institution must offer you support services to help you adjust to study and life in Australia, achieve your learning goals and maintain satisfactory progress in your learning. This support is available because we recognise that Australia may be a new environment for students, with different laws, culture and customs. Your education institution must give you advice on:

- support and welfare services available at the institution
- legal services

- emergency and health services
- facilities and resources
- complaints and appeals processes
- any student visa condition that relates to the course you are studying
- services international students can access for information on their employment rights and conditions, and how to resolve workplace issues, such as through the Fair Work Ombudsman (from 1 January 2018).

Many education institutions also offer career advice services. You should ask them whether they can help advise you on working and careers.

## **Welfare for students under 18 years of age**

If you are under 18 years of age, you will only be granted a visa if there are adequate arrangements in place for your accommodation, support and general welfare. This is for your personal safety and applies for the length of your student visa or until you turn 18.

If you are under the age of 18 your visa application must demonstrate that you will be accompanied by a parent, legal custodian or an eligible relative. If you will not be living with one of these people, your education institution can agree to be responsible for approving your accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements while you are in Australia on a student visa.

If your education institution has approved your living and general welfare arrangements, but you wish to change them, you **must** have the approval of your institution before you do so. This is because your institution must advise the Department of Immigration and Border Protection as soon as possible about changes to living and welfare arrangements for students under 18.

If you don't have your institution's approval, this may be reported to the Department of Immigration and Border Protection. If this happens, you will be in breach of student visa condition 8532 and your visa may be cancelled.

For more information about visa requirements for students under the age of 18, visit:

<http://www.border.gov.au/Busi/Educ/Educ/Welfare-requirements-for-student-visa-applicants-under-18> and <http://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Stud/More/Visa-conditions/visa-conditions-students>.

## **Your responsibilities as an international student in Australia**

### **Your student visa**

As an international student on a student visa, you must:

- comply with your student visa conditions
- ensure you have and continue to maintain your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for as long as you stay in Australia on a student visa
- tell your institution if you change your address or other contact details
- meet the terms of your written agreement with your education institution
- maintain satisfactory course progress and attendance.

Information about visa conditions for student visa holders is available on the Department of Immigration and Border Protection's website at [www.border.gov.au/Trav/Stud/More/Visa-conditions/visa-conditions-students](http://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Stud/More/Visa-conditions/visa-conditions-students), or call 131 881 on Monday – Friday from 8.30am to 4pm inside Australia (except public holidays).

## Academic integrity and misconduct

The Australian Government and education institutions take issues of academic integrity very seriously. Education institutions have many ways of detecting cheating or plagiarism in exams and assessments.

Using ghost writing services, asking someone to take an exam in your place, or any other kind of academic misconduct will result in serious action being taken against you. Your enrolment or student visa could be affected, or cancelled altogether.

If you are struggling with your studies, it's best to ask your institution what support services they can offer you.

## Your consumer rights and protections

### Protecting your tuition fees

Australia is widely recognised as a world leader in protecting the tuition fees of international students through its Tuition Protection Service (TPS). The TPS assists international students whose education institutions are unable to fully deliver their course of study, and ensures that international students are able to either:

- complete their studies in another course or with another education institution, or
- receive a refund of their unspent tuition fees.

In the unlikely event your education institution is unable to deliver a course you have paid for, they have obligations to offer you an alternative course or, if you do not accept the alternative course, pay you a refund of your unspent prepaid tuition fees. If your institution is unable to meet these obligations for some reason, the TPS will assist you in finding an alternative course or getting a refund if a suitable alternative is not found.

For more information on the TPS, visit [www.tps.gov.au](http://www.tps.gov.au). If you are a student whose provider is unable to fully deliver your course, you can call (02) 6271 3440 for assistance.

### Working in Australia

Australian workplace laws provide basic protection and entitlements for all workers in Australia, including workers from overseas. International students have the **same** entitlements to minimum wages and conditions as Australian workers, as well as superannuation and workers' compensation under Australian workplace laws.

The minimum wages and conditions to which an employee is entitled are set out in awards (also known as modern awards). Awards apply to employees depending on the industry they work in or the job that they do. Awards don't apply when a business has an enterprise agreement or other registered agreement that covers the employee's working conditions. For more information on awards and agreements, visit [www.fairwork.gov.au/awards-and-agreements](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/awards-and-agreements).

Australian laws also protect you from being discriminated against at work, for example because of your race, when you are applying for a job, about to begin a job, or any time during your employment. For more

information about discrimination at work, visit <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-entitlements/protections-at-work/protection-from-discrimination-at-work> or <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/>.

The Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) helps employers and employees to understand their rights and responsibilities at work. The FWO can also investigate suspected breaches of workplace laws. To find out what you should be paid and learn more about your minimum workplace entitlements you can visit [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au). You can also call 13 13 94 from 8am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday inside Australia (except public holidays). Getting help to resolve a workplace issue will **not** automatically affect your student visa.

You are limited to 40 hours of work per fortnight when your course is in session, and unlimited hours in out of session periods. This is to ensure you are mainly focused on your studies. Work conditions for student visa holders can be found on the Department of Immigration and Border Protection website at [www.border.gov.au/Trav/Stud/More/Work-conditions-for-Student-visa-holders](http://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Stud/More/Work-conditions-for-Student-visa-holders)

## **Changing education institutions or courses**

If you are not satisfied with the course you are doing and wish to transfer to another education institution, before you make the decision to enrol with another institution you should be aware that there are rules about what you can or cannot do.

From 1 January 2018, if you are a school student and want to change to another education institution before finishing the first six months of your first school course, you must seek permission from your original education institution to transfer. Six months after you start your first school course, you can change to another education institution without asking your original education institution for approval.

For all other students, if you haven't completed six months of your principal course (the main course of study you are undertaking), Australian legislation says that you can only change education institutions if:

- your original institution can no longer provide the course you enrolled in, or
- your original institution says they will release you, or
- you have a government sponsor and that sponsor writes a letter saying they support your change of course.

In other words, you will usually need your institution's permission if you want to transfer before you have completed six months of your principal course.

Your original institution can only provide a letter of release if:

- you have a letter from another institution saying they have made you an enrolment offer
- where you are under 18, you have the support of your parent or legal guardian, or the institution wishing to enrol you says they will take responsibility for your welfare.

You should read and understand your institution's transfer policy, as it should clearly state the reasons that you may or may not be granted a transfer. Your education institution must assess or consider your request to transfer against this policy.

If you are not satisfied with your institution's decision, you can appeal through their internal appeals and complaints handling process. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of that internal appeal process, your options are outlined in the section below, **Making complaints and getting help**.

If you are thinking about changing your course, you need to ensure that you continue to meet the conditions of your student visa. Further information about the impact of changing courses or education institutions is available on the Department of Immigration and Border Protection's website at <http://www.immi.gov.au/Study/Pages/changing-courses.aspx>.

For more details about the legislative requirements around transferring courses, you can visit: <https://internationaleducation.gov.au/Regulatory-Information/Education-Services-for-Overseas-Students-ESOS-Legislative-Framework/National-Code/nationalcodepartd/Pages/ExplanatoryguideD7.aspx>

## **Making complaints and getting help**

If you have a complaint about your institution, you should talk to them first. Your education institution must have complaints and appeals processes in place to help students resolve their issues.

If you cannot resolve your complaint with an institution, there are other actions you can take. You will need to find out whether your institution is a private or government type by searching them and looking at the **Institution type** field on the CRICOS website at <http://cricos.education.gov.au/Institution/InstitutionSearch.aspx>

If your institution is a private (non-government) organisation, you can take your complaint to the Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO). Refer to the Overseas Students Ombudsman website at <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/about/overseas-student-ombudsman-landing-page> for more information about how the OSO can help students, or call 1300 362 072.

If you are studying with a government education institution, which includes most universities and TAFEs, the external appeal body will most likely be the ombudsman for the state or Commonwealth. Your education institution can give you the best information about the appropriate external appeals process for their institution. You can find the contact details of all Australian ombudsmen at [www.ombudsman.gov.au/about/our-history/state-and-territory-ombudsmen](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/about/our-history/state-and-territory-ombudsmen).

## **Questions?**

If you have any questions or concerns that haven't been answered in this fact sheet, you can submit an enquiry at <https://internationaleducation.gov.au/Regulatory-Information/Education-Services-for-Overseas-Students-ESOS-Legislative-Framework/ESOSenquiries/Pages/Default.aspx>

## **Find out more and connect on social media**

**Study in Australia** is the official Australian Government website for international students. You can connect with it through:

- Website: <https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/studyinaustralia>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/futureunlimited>



- YouTube: <http://youtube.com/afutureunlimited>

The **Fair Work Ombudsman** gives you information and advice about your workplace rights and obligations. You can connect with it through:

- Website: <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/fairwork.gov.au>
- Twitter: [https://twitter.com/fairwork\\_gov\\_au](https://twitter.com/fairwork_gov_au)
- YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/FairWorkGovAu>
- Subscribe to email updates at <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/Website-information/staying-up-to-date/subscribe-to-email-updates>

