

Student Support Procedure

Document Name	Student Support Procedure		
Approved by	PEO or delegate	Date	29/05/19
Responsible Officer	Director of Studies Student Services Manager		
This procedure applies to	ECA College and APIC Foundation (RTO Code 45012; CRICOS Provider Code 02644C) Australasian College of Care Leadership and Management (RTO Code 40829, CRICOS Provider Code 03637E) ECA Graduate Institute (RTO Code 91423)		
Related Documents	Student Handbook Student Support Policy		
References and Legislation	Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 Standard 8		
Version	Change description	Approved	Effective Date
v19.0	Updated for new logo and alignment with ECA Group.	PEO	1/06/19
v19.1	Update for ACCLM	PEO	1/09/19
v19.2	Corrected text. Add online conditions for student support.	PEO	25/10/19
V19.3	Addition of Converge International services	PEO	16/12/19

1. Purpose

The ECA Group is committed to the provision of support services for enrolled students with staff in place who are appointed for contact and referral for course and academic enquiries, student support and general welfare matters. All enrolling students are provided with an orientation which includes guidance concerning student support services.

For international students, the ECA Group is committed to assisting them make an effective transition to life and study in Australia, providing information on living, studying and working in Australia, academic progress, and information on accommodation, counselling, financial, health, safety and welfare services.

2. Scope

This policy applies to international and domestic student (potential or actual) who are enrolled in Education Centre of Australia Pty Ltd (ECA Group) educational institutions including ECA College (ECAC), ECA Graduate Institute (EGI) and Australasian College of Care Leadership and Management (ACCLM).

3. Definitions

Item	Definition
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework which can be accessed at http://www.aqf.edu.au/
Course	Means any nationally recognised qualification, unit of competency, skill set or short course in which a student is enrolled with the RTO
Course/Unit	To simplify the language used in the VET Sector procedures and associated documents, the word 'course/unit' has been uniformly used to encompass both a 'unit of competency' from Training Packages and a 'module' from curriculum-based courses.
Converge International	ECA Groups Student assistance program providers of professional counselling support in all areas of study, work and life.
Learner	An individual, enrolled with the RTO, who is receiving, responding to and processing information in order to acquire and develop competence. This incorporates the processes of preparing and presenting for assessment.
Privacy	National Privacy Principles contained in the Commonwealth Privacy Act.
Program	A structured and integrated program of education or training consisting of a number of units of competency or modules or an accredited short course, usually leading to the award of a qualification.
Services	Training, assessment, related educational and support services and/or any activities related to the recruitment of prospective learners and the learner completing the course. It does not include services such as student counselling, mediation or ICT support.
Vocational Education & Training (VET)	Vocational education and training (VET) is that part of tertiary education and training which provides accredited training in job related and technical skills.

4. Procedure

4.1. International and domestic student learners are provided with a range of information including handbooks and an orientation presentation, specific information about on-campus safety and issues relevant to life in Australia. ECA Group publishes policies, procedures and offers services designed to address both international and domestic student needs, including:

- Student support services and how to access such services on-campus and online
- English language and academic support services
- IT support services and timeframes for IT responses for online learning students
- Legal services and points of reference
- Emergency and health services
- Facilities and resources
- Critical incidents procedures
- Complaints and appeals procedure
- Visa conditions requiring course progress
- Support services are available to assist students with general or personal circumstances affecting their studies
- Services students can access information on students' employment rights and conditions, and how to resolve workplace issues, such as through the Fair Work Ombudsman
- Specific information about on-campus safety.
- Student Code of Conduct which enables all learners a safe and supportive educational environment.

- 4.2. The Student Services Officer (SSO) is a designated member of staff and provides the contact point for international and domestic students. The SSO ensures that where staff have identified, or enrolled students have indicated their need of support or welfare, the SSO will seek further advice from the student.
- 4.3. As the point of contact for a student, the SSO will:
- Respond to questions concerning academic or course progress and refer the student to any relevant training staff for further advice.
 - Where an accommodation or general welfare issue arises, the SSO will provide advice on accommodation, State Public services, counselling assistance with personal, Emotional or cultural issues.
 - The student should be advised that the support services of the ECA Group are at no extra cost.
- 4.4. Pre-Enrolment information for international students.
- 4.4.1. ECA Group publishes relevant information about student support issues such as living, studying and working in Australia, academic and general information on Safety and awareness relevant to life in Australia on the ECA Group websites and in the ECA Group Student Handbook. This information is freely accessible by all potential students on the ECA Group websites prior to the application processes and their arrival in Australia. ECA Group publishes its Student Services staff contact information in handbooks, in communal areas on campus and in orientation documents.
- 4.4.2. ECA requires that its approved agents are aware of this pre-enrolment information and that they make it available to all prospective international students making enquiries about studying with ECA Group.
- 4.4.3. Appropriate links on ECA Group websites and handbooks will provide information on ESOS National Code policies and procedures, and access to links to appropriate sites containing up to date information on issues of health, safety, accommodation, banking and finance, visa and immigration, and local culture respectively. Additional questions relating to these matters can be referred to ECA Group Student Services Officers and the Student Services Manager and/or Director of Studies.
- 4.4.4. Prospective international students read and sign an International Student Offer and Acceptance Form which provides a wide range of information for international students.
- 4.5. Orientation
- 4.5.1. All new students, including International students (and their Agents) and domestic Students, will be informed at least one week prior to enrolment of a student Orientation Day organised by the Student Services Officer: its date, time and location.
- 4.5.2. On Enrolment, and at the Orientation Day, enrolled international and domestic students will be welcomed by the ECA Group PEO, DOS and the Student Services Coordinator and their delegates.
- 4.5.3. The short-term objectives of orientation focus on assisting all new students to become part of the ECA Group community by:
- demonstrating to all students that they are welcome and valued by ECA Group in general, and introducing them to their academic and service staff, and their fellow students;
 - providing sufficient and timely information for students to begin study and establish themselves as ECA Group students;
 - for International students, providing further information on life, study and work in Australia on a student visa; assisting students to develop a belief that their own efforts significantly affect their chances of future success, and encouraging them to assume responsibility for their actions and academic progress;
 - by making them aware of whom to approach for assistance.
- 4.5.4. The objectives of ECA Group's orientation program is to:

- Assist new students to participate comprehensively in ECA Group student life and to facilitate intellectual, emotional, social, ethical, and physical wellbeing and development during the course of the student's enrolment;
 - Encourage new students to be resilient and complete their ECA Group program/s;
 - Help prepare and orient new students to achieve their educational and life objectives.
- 4.5.5. Students will be directed to the ECA Group websites as the first source of information, and provided with access to the ECA Group Student Handbook which includes key information for all students and for international students on policies and procedures and on their rights and responsibilities as holders of student visas and as ECA Group students, including:
- Student conduct – personal and academic;
 - Student facilities and services including accommodation and health cover;
 - Attendance, leave, compassionate and compelling circumstances;
 - Academic performance, assessment, completion, complaints and appeals;
 - Academic counselling and support;
 - Student enrolment, fees, cancellation of enrolment, transfers and refunds;
 - ECA staff and staff responsibilities;
 - Visa conditions and non-compliance;
 - Life and work in Australia for international students; and
 - ECA agents.
- 4.6. During the Orientation session international and domestic students will be introduced to ECA Group academic services, student services and administration staff, and briefed on (as applicable):
- local culture, life in Sydney and local amenities;
 - Student services;
 - Staff contacts for students;
 - academic counselling;
 - on-campus and online welfare counselling services;
 - accommodation services;
 - critical incident and emergency contacts;
 - health insurance and maintaining OSHC;
 - fees and fee refunds policy and procedures;
 - recognition of prior learning and credit transfer policies and procedures;
 - legal requirements relating to students' visa;
 - keeping address and contact details up-to-date;
 - working and your student visa;
 - attendance requirements;
 - course progress requirements
 - completion of the course in the normal amount of time;
 - complaints, grievances and appeals;
 - student code of conduct
 - communication policy and etiquette (e.g. internet and mobile phones);
 - safety (bomb threats, fire drills, evacuation and points of assembly);
 - facilities on Campus and online
 - introduction to the college website and student portal
 - IT support and online learning support services
 - Emergency and health services
 - English Language and Study assistance program
- 4.6.1. Students are also asked to complete a declaration to ensure that they have received all the relevant information about the course and college.
- 4.7. Student Academic Support Strategies

- 4.7.1. ECA recognises the importance of ensuring student access to relevant support services, including welfare services and academic support personnel and services empowering students as far as possible.
 - 4.7.2. A central element of this strategy is the Academic intervention strategy which is designed to identify students who may need academic help with their study and to identify any students who may be at risk because of unsatisfactory academic progress and/or attendance.
 - 4.7.3. The Intervention Strategy involves a number of elements/stages and students are referred to the Course Progress procedures in plain English and in graphical form for easy understanding in Orientation and in the Student Handbook.
- 4.8. Student welfare strategies
- 4.8.1. In addition to the academic support and personal counselling services referred to above, and support sessions, there are a range of external organisations that may be deemed helpful to students.
 - 4.8.2. The third-party organisations that are not related to ECA Group that are able to potentially provide student with assistance include:
 - The Australian Red Cross (general social support) www.redcross.org.au and 1800 811 700
 - Mission Australia (general social support) www.missionaustralia.com.au/ and 13 11 14
 - St Vincent De Paul Society (general social support) <https://www.vinnies.org.au/> and (02) 9568 0262
 - Beyond Blue (depression)- <http://www.beyondblue.org.au/> and 1300 22 36 46
 - Gambling Help Australia (issues with gambling and gaming addiction) <https://www.gamblinghelponline.org.au/> and 1800 858 858
 - Lifeline Australia (self-harm and suicide help line) www.lifeline.org.au/ and 13 11 14
 - Relationships Australia (personal relationship support) <http://www.relationships.org.au/> and 1300 364 277

5. Student Welfare

- 5.1. Prior to their enrolment, International students are provided with information pertaining to living and studying in Australia, including information relating to accommodation, health services and insurance, counselling and working in Australia while on a student visa.
- 5.2. Comprehensive information on student support and welfare services is also provided to both international and domestic students during their Orientation and in the Student Handbook and on the ECA Group websites.
- 5.3. The ECA Group Student Support Officers also provide clear information during orientation sessions.
- 5.4. The first point of contact for International students experiencing personal difficulties of a non-academic nature (financial problems, health problems, and all matters related to the welfare, safety, visa and emergency situations) is the ECA Group Student Support Officers who will refer them to other appropriate ECA Group staff as appropriate, if additional support is required. Students requiring Fee Extensions, Special Consideration, Special Examination or Leave of Absence are required to complete the appropriate form and submit online or directly to the Student Support Officer who will manage the processing and resolution of the request.
- 5.5. Students experiencing Health and/or psychological-emotional problems will be referred to professional medical services and counsellors by the ECA Group Student Support Officer who is responsible for handling initial inquiries, assessing the situation and, when necessary, referring students to appropriate help.
- 5.6. Students experiencing problems of a legal nature (theft, break-ins, assault, sexual abuse and assault, racial/ethnic abuse and/or discrimination) will be referred to appropriate bodies for assistance. Where appropriate the ECA Group Student Support Officer will be available to accompany the student to such services if requested to do so by the student.
- 5.7. Records of student welfare cases and interventions will be maintained by the ECA Student Support Officer on student profile.

- 5.8. All student service support and counselling and referral and reporting will respect the privacy of students and comply with the requirements of privacy legislation.
- 5.9. All staff at the ECA Group are made aware of the obligations under the ESOS framework, through familiarity with the relevant policies and procedures, and through access to information centres on SharePoint and ECA Group websites.
- 5.10. Welfare services
- 5.10.1. ECA Group provides free counselling services through Converge International for all ECA Group students who are experiencing personal difficulties or need help to settle with their new life in Australia.
- 5.10.2. Converge International is an external, professional, counselling company which provides student psychological and well-being services. This student assistance program is a confidential service, available to all students for up to 2 sessions per issue. Counselling service is available 24 hours, 7 days a week. Details of your discussion will not be shared with ECA Group staff.
- 5.10.3. Depending on the student's circumstances, they may request a face to face meeting, an urgent telephone call, a video call or a zoom meeting.
Meetings can be arranged by calling 1300 687 327 or visiting the following website: <https://www.convergeinternational.com.au/> and logging in through the Converge Portal Login using:
Username: converge
Password: eap.
Students must use the name of their college when booking an appointment.
- 5.10.4. Any students who would like help booking can speak to one of our helpful student services officers. Students can download Converge International's 'EAP Connect' App through the Apple and Google Play store to their phone/laptop, so that they have easy access to these services, whenever they want. This App can be used to make bookings, change appointments and to access mindfulness activities. **Counselling services are confidential and free of charge for all ECA Group students.**
- 5.10.5. International students:
- Satisfy their student visa conditions, which includes payment of fees and satisfactory academic progress. For more information: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au>
 - Maintain their Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for the period of your stay
 - Meet the terms of the written agreement with their provider
 - Inform their provider if they change their address (within 7 days)
 - Maintain satisfactory course progress and satisfactory attendance requirements
 - International students must advise ECA Group of any changes in their Australian and home country addresses and phone numbers within 7 days.
- 5.10.6. International Student Fact Sheet:
<https://docs.education.gov.au/documents/international-student-fact-sheet>