

Student Support Services

POLICY

Hales Institute ensures that appropriate student support services, both academic and personal are provided to assist students to complete their studies and enhance their personal lives and that the students are aware of these. The documented policy and procedures ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities to students in terms of providing advice, support and referral.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to overseas and domestic students.

Overseas Students – This policy is in reference to the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007, Part D Standard 6 'Student Support Services'.

PROCEDURE

Definitions

- **National Code:** The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007.
- **ESOS:** Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000.
- **Welfare:** For the purpose of this policy, 'welfare' refers to all matters pertaining to the physical, mental, and well being of students.
- **Student Handbook:** Hales Institute produces publication outlining current information for students on support services, policies and procedures and life in Australia.

Student Support

Whilst all staff employed by Hales Institute have the responsibility to provide support to all students, Hales has Student Support Services staff that is available to all students, on an appointment basis, during business hours.

Students can access the Student Support Services staff by appointment which is organised as soon as practical.

Student Support Services staff include, but not limited to:

- Student Support Services Manager
- International Student Contact Person (ISCP) – during business hours
- Academic Coordinators.

Orientation Programs

All students are required to attend an orientation day at the beginning of their studies with Hales.

The orientation program is an important part of our support services.

We provide information on all aspects of the Institute's operation and culture. We invite guest speakers.

Student Support Services

Students are addressed by the Student Support Services staff who explain their role in providing information and support in relation to adjusting to living in a new culture, coping with relationship and family issues, dealing with homesickness, stress or depression, managing time, or maintaining motivation.

At the orientation program students are also introduced to their International Student Contact Person and the role that this person plays in their study at Hales Institute.

Students are also provided with a copy of the Student Handbook, which outlines detailed information on:

- Student support services available to students in the transition to life and study in a new environment.
- Legal services
- Emergency and health services
- Facilities and recourses
- Complains and appeals processes
- Any student visa condition relating to course progress and/or attendance as appropriate
- After hours Student Assistance Line.

The orientation program also includes a tour of the Campus identifying classrooms, student areas, student administration area, and any other relevant areas within the RTO such as toilets, fire exits, and restricted areas.

Support Services include:

- **Welfare (Physical, Mental and Emotional)**

Students can discuss physical, mental, or emotional issues that may arise for them during the course of their studies. Where the Student Support Services staff are unable or not appropriate to assist a student, that student will be referred to the professional counselling or medical services. The referral is free of charge, however, the fee for professional counselling may occur and that needs to be covered by student. Hales Institute is working with *International Students Care Service*.

- **Personal / Social**

There are many issues that may affect a student's social or personal life and students have access to advice and guidance on personal issues, accommodation issues, or family/friend issues. Where it is felt further support should be gained, a referral to an appropriate support service will be organised.

- **Financial**

Students who have financial issues during the course of their studies can discuss this with Accounts Officer or nominee. The Student Support Services staff can also help students with learning to manage their budget.

- **Legal Advice**

Student Support Services can provide some advice and guidance on a limited range of situations. Where the Student Support Services team member feels it

Student Support Services

is appropriate for students to gain professional legal advice they make a referral to an appropriate legal professional services.

- **Academic support**

Students are monitored and supported through their studies. Students of Hales Institute have access to support classes at no additional cost. The support classes are aimed at assisting students to grasp the basic concepts of:

- English language comprehension and writing
- IELTS exam practice
- General Study Skills (eg. time management, library research, essay writing and research)
- Computing support
- Visa or amendment to enrolment related issues.

The Program Coordinators work closely with the Student Support Services to identify and counsel all students at risk of not meeting academic progress. That includes:

- Students who have been absent for more than five consecutive days without approval,
- Students whose poor attendance puts academic progress at risk,
- Students who have breached or are at risk of breaching the course progress requirements.

Support for Students with Disabilities / Learning Difficulties

- Students and/or parents should advise the college in advance and provide documentation of any disabilities that may affect the student's progress prior to commencement of the course.
- Where Hales staff are aware of a disability affecting a student, reasonable adjustments are made to teaching arrangements/materials to assist these students with their learning.

Job Club

Students can access Job Club on appointment basis as well as during regular workshops and seminars to:

- Prepare for job interview, gain CV writing and employment presentation skills
- Get help obtaining Tax File Number (TFN)
- Get information on Workplace Rights

Resources

- Computer Laboratory – there is a shared access to computers and internet for students to use within the student lounge.
- Common Room – Hales provides a student recreational lounge in its Swanston Street campus. This area is for students to relax between classes. Kitchen facilities are provided along with tables and chairs for studying and eating, as well as for relaxing and conversing with fellow students.

Student Support Services

- Resources Centre – The City Library is located within minutes of Hales Institute. At the City Library there is wealth of resources available to students including CDs, DVDs and books. There is no membership fee.
- Information Boards – These are located on every level. Sections of these boards are available to students to put up notices but must be authorised by staff at the Reception on level 3.
- Newsletter – Published quarterly on our website and Facebook page, the Hales Newsletter contains all the latest news from Hales.
- Facebook – Hales Institute page on Facebook is updated regularly with the latest events, news and photos from our Campuses. Students can find valuable information for their life in Australia and enjoy snapshots of busy life at Hales.

Accommodation and Airport pick-up

Hales Institute is able to link students with short term home-stay accommodation and airport pick-up if required.

Students are referred to appropriate accommodation services and can discuss any issues or concerns they may have with their accommodation arrangements.

All students are encouraged to have accommodation organised prior to arrival in Australia.

Medical Issues

The Student Support Services Department has an up to date list of medical professionals within access from the college location and any student with medical concerns should inform the student support officer who will assist them in finding an appropriate medical professional.

The emergency phone number for an ambulance in Australia is '000'. (This number should only be dialled in an emergency and you require ambulance, police, or fire attendance).

Social Inclusion

Student Support Services will organise social events that allow all students enrolled with Hales to mingle and socialise. These events may range from cultural and sightseeing events, to dinners, excursions and sporting events.

They will be organised as demand requires and any suggestions can be forwarded to Student Support Services.

Cultural Awareness

All staff have access to information and/or training on cultural awareness to build a sensitivity for the issues related to a multi-cultural environment. International students will also receive some information to help assist them to deal with the cultural challenges associated with living and studying in a new country.

Where required, information about churches and prayer rooms will be provided to the students.

Student Support Services

Student Safety

- At orientation Hales Institute promotes student awareness of personal safety risks and what to do in the event of personal crises. This information conveys to students the types of behaviours which are considered unacceptable in Australia (eg. harassment, discrimination, bullying, violence etc) and what to do if they experience such events. The information also includes safe travel tips.
- The Occupational Health and Safety Officer monitors and addresses any reported hazards in the workplace.

Critical Incident Management

Hales has a comprehensive Critical Incident Policy to be enacted for any incident which has the potential to, or actually does, invade upon the well being of Hales students, staff or the college.

Access to Information

Students are provided with up to date information on the welfare and support services offered by Hales Institute via the following mechanisms:

- Hales website www.hales.edu.au
- Pre-departure guide which includes information regarding accommodation, arrival procedures and adopting to life in Australia
- Orientation program
- A Student Handbook provided at Orientation
- Newsletter, facebook page and information boards
- Student Assistance Line.

Staff

Staff who interact directly with international students undertake relevant training to ensure they are up-to date with current legislation. All staff are encouraged to undertake regular professional development in areas including but not limited to: cultural awareness and first aid training (related to both physical and mental health issues).

Related Documents

- Student Support Services and Safety Plan
- Critical Incident Policy

Responsibility	Institute Manager and Student Support Services Manager
Policy Endorsed By	Continuous Improvement Committee
Policy Complies with	AQTF 2007 and National Code 2007
Version Number	Version 3 – 04.8.2010