



Student Support Services Policy and Procedures

Policy

This policy is to outline the appropriate services provided by Gold Coast Learning Centre to support students to adjust to study and life in Australia, achieve their learning goals and make satisfactory progress towards meeting the learning outcomes of the course in which they are enrolled. The support services include complaint and appeals procedures, course progress, attendance requirements, accommodation issues, counselling and orientation programme.

This policy applies to students and all staff involved in the provision of support services for international students.

Process

1. Within Gold Coast Learning Centre, a team of designated Student Contact Officers are appointed to ensure successful adjustment by students to life and study in Australia and assist in the resolution of student problems that could impede completion of their studies.
2. These Contact Officers include the Director of Studies, Academic Coordinator, Student Services Officer and Administrator Officer.
3. Contact Officer details will be made available to students during the orientation program and access to current information on Gold Coast Learning Centre support services can be found in the Gold Coast Learning Centre staff area.
4. The Academic Coordinator shall ensure:
 - Staff members who interact directly with students are aware of the Gold Coast Learning Centre's obligations under the ESOS framework and the potential implications for students arising from the exercise of these obligations.
 - Gold Coast Learning Centre must have a documented critical incident policy and procedures that cover the actions to be taken in the event of a critical incident, required follow-up to the incident, and records of the incident and action taken.
 - Gold Coast Learning Centre must designate a member of staff or members of staff to be the official point of contact for students.
 - Student Contact Officer must have access to up-to-date details of the registered provider's support services.
 - Gold Coast Learning Centre must have sufficient student support personnel to meet the needs of the students enrolled with GCLC.

- Gold Coast Learning Centre must supply details of the orientation program and information provided to students. This information must comply with the requirements of *National Code 2007* Standard 6.1 and be clear and easily understood by the students.
- Gold Coast Learning Centre must show evidence of an ongoing review process to ensure that staff members have up-to-date details of the support services available to students.
- Student Support Services' policy must clearly demonstrate that these services adequately meet the needs of the international student population.
- Policies and procedures for informing staff are incorporated into staff handbooks and induction training.
- Promotional material both printed and electronic contains information on support services provided and students are advised of these services.
- Students are made aware of the various support services at the orientation program.
- Airport reception and accommodation placement services are available and liaison with the Student Services Officer.
- College materials containing the college's complaint procedure is made available at enrolment.
- Tours of the college and provision of other activities are provided to the new students.
- Students are aware of the support services available and Student Contact Officers details are provided.
- Students are referred to various support services according to the circumstances.

5. Director of Studies (DOS)/Academic Coordinator shall:

- Assist with the enrolment procedures for new students.
- Assist students to understand the teaching and learning styles to be applied by teachers at Gold Coast Learning Centre.
- Assist international students with problems faced in classroom situations, assignments, assessment or other issues around the centre.
- Liaise with teaching staff when students report difficulties with their studies caused by timetables or other issues arising out of classroom management procedures.
- Liaise with Gold Coast Learning Centre Student Support Service staff when students present difficulties which call for intervention from trained counsellors.

6. Student Services Officer ensures:

- the provision of confidential counselling services to students;
- the provision of other advice services e.g. those associated with personal issues, time management and budgeting;
- information on Student Support Services staff is provided during the orientation program for new students;
- provide tours of Gold Coast Learning Centre and city for students during orientation;
- assist students to settle into the college and support them in adjusting to the Australian way of life and culture;
- notify students of who to contact during an emergency; and
- advise students of GCLC's emergency number.

7. Teachers/Trainers shall:

- assist in enrolment of new students and ensure timetables are available at enrolment;
- assist students to understand assignment tasks or other assessment methodologies being used by teachers;
- assist students presenting difficulties causing them to miss classes and refer the students to the DOS/ Academic Coordinator or Student Services Officer if additional assistance is required.

8. The support services provided by Gold Coast Learning Centre will include:

- information provided on links to independent accommodation providers and real estate agencies;
- orientation program co-ordinated and managed by Gold Coast Learning Centre;
- DOS/ Academic Coordinator to assist and counsel students in their adjustment to the challenges of the Australian learning environment;
- access to counsellors in the Student Support Services;
- access to the college's complaints and appeals procedures; and
- advice on affordable, independent dispute resolution organisations.

9. The Academic Coordinator will ensure that information on all support services listed in section 4 is available to students or intending students prior to enrolment.

10. Students or intending students will be required to sign a declaration on the Pre-course Commencement Declaration Form as outlined below:
 - seek assistance from teachers, Director of Studies, Academic Coordinator and Gold Coast Learning Centre staff as appropriate if any difficulties are experienced with any aspect of your course;
 - seek assistance from the Student Services Officer or Gold Coast Learning Centre staff if any difficulties arise of a personal nature or difficulties with budgeting or time management;
 - acknowledge receipt of the Gold Coast Learning Centre Student Handbook and understand the responsibility to read it;
 - read and understand the Gold Coast Learning Centre Cancellation and Complaints and Appeals Policies.
11. Students or intending students will also be required to declare on the student offer and acceptance agreement for an intending student along with payment of their tuition fees and Overseas Student Health Cover (if appropriate).
12. The Academic Coordinator will instruct staff that students or intending students will not be offered enrolment unless the declaration in section 5 and 6 above are signed by the student or intending international student. Copies of these signed documents are to be kept in the student files.
13. The Academic Coordinator will ensure suitably qualified teachers and staff are appointed to assist students adjust to life and study in Australia and assist students resolve problems that could impede completion of their studies.
14. The Academic Coordinator will ensure relevant Gold Coast Learning Centre staff members are aware of their responsibilities under the ESOS legislation through regular information sessions, meetings and updates on modifications from various government departments relating to international students and the potential impacts for the students.
15. During their orientation program the DOS/Academic Coordinator will advise newly arrived students of the teaching and assessment methodologies used at the college and advice regarding settling into life in Australia.
16. The DOS/Academic Coordinator will be available for consultation with international students that will coincide with breaks in the student timetables to ensure students do not miss classes.
17. The DOS/Academic Coordinator will liaise with teaching staff should issues arise during consultation with students over assignments, assessments, classroom management issues or other matters stemming from the teaching of courses.
18. The DOS/Academic Coordinator will liaise with the Dean regarding in-service teaching with appropriate organisations to ensure teachers with international students are aware of the special requirements of international students.
19. The DOS and Academic Coordinator will be encouraged to undertake professional development programs to build their expertise and understanding of how to assist

international students adjust to their life as students in Australia and to assist international students resolve problems that could impede completion of their studies.

20. The Student Services Officer will advise students of the college complaints and appeals policy and procedures that include informal or formal procedures.
21. International students may request Gold Coast Learning Centre staff members to act as mediators between the students and another other party.
22. The Managers will be encouraged to join organisations such as ISANA (International Students Advisors Network of Australasia) to enable networking opportunities within a peak body of Australian institutions providing courses and services for international students.
23. The Director will be called to participate in a formal Gold Coast Learning Centre complaint.

Complaints process

1. All new students and continuing students will be provided with a copy of the Student Information booklet at the orientation and the time of enrolment or re- enrolment.
2. The Gold Coast Learning Centre's Student Information booklet will contain information on such matters as:
 - Student progress
 - Visa conditions
 - Student support services
 - Facilities and resources
 - Assessment
 - Complaints and appeals process
 - Articulation
 - Staff
 - Attendance and Lateness
 - Emergency and Health services
 - Security
 - Student Discipline
 - Graduation
 - Presentation of written work
 - Referencing in assignments
 - Other matters relevant to successful studies at the college
3. Students have a right to a support person at informal or formal Gold Coast Learning Centre complaints and appeals procedure hearings.
4. The Director may call upon the Academic Coordinator to participate in a formal college complaint for International or other students.
5. Standard 8.3 – National Code 2007 - If a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the internal complaint handling and appeals process, Gold Coast Learning Centre will advise the student of his or her right to access the external appeals process.

Gold Coast Learning Centre will ensure that students have access to a fair, inexpensive complaints and appeals process.

External Complaints and Appeals Procedure

GCLC students will be informed of their options for external agencies that can assist in the resolution of disputes.

As Gold Coast Learning Centre is a member of The Australian Council for Private Education & Training (ACPET), GCLC students have access to ACPET's services for external review at a cost to the student.

ACPET administers the applications received for external review and refers the complaints to a panel of independent External Reviewers to undertake external review in accordance with the National Code 2007.

ACPET and the External Reviewer are independent from the Registered Provider, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC).

The External Reviewer is a member of the External Review Panel. The External Reviewer is separate and independent from ACPET.

The External Reviewer has no personal or professional interest in the outcome of the complaints or appeals process and has no influence on the policy setting of GCLC. The External Reviewer is separated in structure from both parties involved in the complaints and appeals process and is financially and administratively independent of GCLC.

ACPET's involvement in the external review process is to administer the applications made by students and to forward the applications and supporting documents to the External Reviewer. ACPET has no involvement in the decision making process.

To ensure fair and equal treatment of students and Registered Providers, and to avoid conflicts of interest,

Members of the External Review Panel are practicing lawyers with thorough knowledge and understanding of the National Code 2007 and the relevant provisions of the Migration Act and Regulations relating to student visas.

If a student is dissatisfied with GCLC's policies and procedures, the student may contact the DEEWR through the ESOS mailbox: esosmailbox@deewr.gov.au or through the ESOS helpline (02) 6240 5069.

In addition, GCLC students will be informed that there is a Justice Mediation service which is free of charge.

Justice mediation is a face-to-face meeting between a person who has been harmed in an incident (the complainant) and the person responsible for the incident (the defendant). It is voluntary, confidential and free.

The complainant can talk about how they were affected by the defendant's actions and the defendant has an opportunity to try to repair the harm their actions have caused. Friends or relatives may attend the session to offer support.

- Specially trained mediators help to guide the discussion about the offence and how the offender might make up for causing the damage or harm. The aim is to work out ways the offender can make amends. Making amends means being responsible for actions.

A defendant's assurance that the offence will not be repeated can help repair the emotional harm suffered. Sometimes defendants agree to attend counselling or enrol in special courses.

Mediators come from the Dispute Resolution Branch and are drawn from all walks of life. Mediators take an oath of secrecy and are independent of the courts and police.

Students will be directed to the website of the Department of Justice www.justice.qld.gov.au/justice-services/dispute-resolution for further information on this service.