

ISP Student Support Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines how the Department of Education and Training (International Education Division) (DET (IED)) and schools support international students to adjust to study and life in Australia. This policy should be read in conjunction with all underpinning procedures and checklists, and is for DET (IED) and schools. This policy may be useful for international students, their parents and education agents to understand the type of support international students can expect to receive when living in Victoria and studying in a Victorian government school.

Scope

This policy applies to international students participating in the International Student Program (ISP) as the primary holder of a subclass 500 Student - Schools visa.

Policy

Student Support

Schools must have sufficient student support personnel to meet the needs of the international students enrolled at the school. Please refer to the [ISP Student Support Self-assessment Tool](#) for information to assist schools in meeting this requirement and demonstrating how this requirement is met.

Schools must ensure their staff members who interact directly with international students are aware of the school's obligations under the Education Services and Overseas Students (ESOS) framework and the potential implications for overseas students arising from these obligations.

Additionally, the International Student Coordinator (ISC) and student support staff members must receive training in the Child Safe Standards; policies and procedures for managing emergency situations and critical incidents; policies and procedures for verifying that the student's accommodation is appropriate to the student's age and needs; and in the ESOS framework, the National Code and the VRQA Guidelines for the Enrolment of Overseas Students Aged Under 18 Years.

Schools must retain evidence of their staff, resources and facilities in place to support international students and their awareness of the obligations under the ESOS framework in accordance with the requirements in this policy.

Official point of contact for international students

Schools must designate a staff member to be the official point of contact for international students, for example the ISC. The student contact officer or officers must have access to up-to-date details of the school's support services and must have an appropriate level of skill, knowledge and expertise to be able to provide advice to international students on a range of matters.

Schools must provide international students with a Student Safety Card at the time of commencement of the course which includes the school's contact details, including 24/7 contact details for the school's student contact officer/ISC and general emergency contact information. For further information please refer to the [ISP Student Safety Card Procedure](#).

Student orientation

DET (IED) and schools assist international students in successfully adjusting to life in Victoria and studying in a Victorian government school. Schools must prepare and deliver an age and culturally appropriate orientation program to ensure international students receive information on their local area, their school, their course, DET (IED) policies and procedures, their visa conditions and their homestay, if required. Specifically, the orientation program for international students must provide information about:

- support services available to assist international students:
 - to help them adjust to study and life in Australia
 - with English language proficiency
 - with study and academic achievement
 - with general or personal circumstances that may adversely affect their education in Australia
- the school's facilities and resources

- requirements for course attendance and progress, as appropriate
- emergency and health services
- DET (IED) complaints and appeals processes
- any relevant legal services
- 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, consistent with the visa conditions of the student
- actions international students can take to enhance their personal security and safety
- how to seek assistance for and report incidents that significantly impact on their wellbeing, including critical incidents or child abuse
- general information on safety and awareness relevant to life in Australia, for example sun and water safety.

DET (IED) and schools must give relevant information or provide referrals as appropriate to international students who request assistance in relation to the services and programs set out above, at no additional cost to the international student.

Please refer to the [ISP Student Arrival and Orientation Procedure](#) for processes relating to international student arrival and orientation.

Learning support

Schools must offer reasonable support to international students to enable them to achieve expected learning outcomes regardless of the international student's place of study or the mode of study of the course, at no additional cost to the overseas student. Schools must also facilitate access to learning support services consistent with the requirements of the course, mode of study and the learning needs of overseas student cohorts. Please refer to the [ISP Modes of Study Procedure](#) for processes for supporting and maintaining contact with overseas students undertaking online or distance units of study.

Roles and responsibilities

The **Executive Director, IED** is responsible for the approval of this policy, as the nominated Principal Executive Officer of DET as a CRICOS registered provider (Code 00861K). The Executive Director, IED is also responsible for ensuring DET (IED) staff are aware and understand their responsibility under this policy and all underpinning procedures. This includes ensuring all staff are provided with adequate information to effectively discharge their responsibilities. The Executive Director, IED will approve any guidance materials related to this policy prepared by DET (IED) for schools.

DET (IED) staff are required to be familiar with the content of this policy including all underpinning policies, procedures and guidance materials and their respective responsibilities. DET (IED) staff will develop guidance materials to assist schools in supporting international students.

The **Principal** will be both responsible and accountable for taking all practical measures to ensure that this policy and all underpinning procedures are effectively implemented and embedded in their school. This includes ensuring all school staff are provided with adequate information to effectively discharge their responsibilities. The Principal must:

- appoint sufficient and suitably qualified staff to meet the needs of the international students enrolled in the school's ISP
- designate a member or members of its staff to be the official point of contact for international students
- oversee the school's ongoing support provided to international students to adjust to study and life in Australia
- ensure staff members who interact directly with international students are aware of the school's obligations under the ESOS framework and the potential implications for overseas students arising from the exercise of these obligations
- ensure the school retains evidence of the staff, resources and facilities in place to support international students and their awareness of the obligations under the ESOS framework in accordance with the requirements in this policy.

School staff are responsible for providing international students with an age and culturally appropriate orientation program, and subsequent ongoing support to adjust to study and life in Australia.

Legislation

- *Education Services and Overseas Students Act 2000* (Cth)
- *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018* (Cth)

Associated documents

- [ISP Student Arrival and Orientation Procedure](#)
- [ISP Student Safety Card Procedure](#)
- [ISP Modes of Study Procedure](#)
- [ISP Student Orientation Checklist](#)
- [ISP Student Support Self-assessment Tool](#)

Definitions

- **Child abuse** includes any act committed against a child involving a sexual offence; or an offence under section 490 (2) of the *Crimes Act 1958* (grooming); and the infliction, on a child, of physical violence; or serious emotional or psychological harm; and serious neglect of a child.
- **DET (IED)** - Department of Education and Training - International Education Division. IED is the division in DET that administers the International Student Program in Victorian government schools. IED is not a separate entity to DET. DET is the CRICOS registered provider.
- **Education agents** are accredited by DET (IED) to recruit students for an ISP course.
- **International students (students)** for the purpose of this policy are defined as students participating in the ISP under a subclass 500 Student - Schools visa.
- **International Student Program (ISP)** for the purpose of this policy is defined as DET's ISP administered by the DET International Education Division (IED).
- **DET (IED) staff** includes the Executive Officers, managers and employees (full time, part time, ongoing, fixed term, casual and contractor) of DET who work directly or indirectly with the ISP. This excludes school staff.
- **Parent** refers to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of an international student.
- **School** means any Victorian government school accredited by DET (IED) to deliver an international student program.
- **School enrolment cap** refers to the maximum number of international students that can be enrolled at any one time in an accredited school.
- **School staff** are employees of schools, for example - International Student Coordinator, Homestay Coordinator, Head of Department, Deputy Principal, and Principal.
- **Student Contact Officer** means employee(s) of the school deemed to have an appropriate level of skill, knowledge and expertise who is able to provide advice to international students on a range of matters.

Policy contact

For further information, please contact the DET (IED) School Support Team on + 61 3 7022 1000.

Maintenance officer

Portfolio Director, International Education
International Education Division
Department of Education and Training.
Level 28, 80 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria 3000
Email: international@edumail.vic.gov.au
Phone: +61 3 7022 1000

Authorised

Executive Director, International Education Division

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Review frequency: This policy will be reviewed at minimum every 12 months or when any changes arise impacting its currency, including legislative or regulation change.