

LANGUAGE CENTRE



AUSTRALIAN
ACADEMY *of*
COMMERCE

Explore. Learn. Achieve

**INTERNATIONAL
STUDENT HANDBOOK
ELICOS
2018**

V2018.1

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This Student Handbook is the property of:

Name

Address in Australia

Home Telephone

Mobile

Email

Student ID Number

Passport Number

Overseas Health Cover Number

Tax File Number

In case of emergency please notify:

Name

Address in Australia

Telephone

Mobile

Email

Relationship to you

Letter of introduction

Welcome to the Australian Academy of Commerce! This handbook has been created to help you understand how we do things at the Academy and provide general information about Australia.

If you cannot find the answer to your question in the Student Handbook or you would like more information, please ask one of the staff members. We are sure the time you spend with us will be rewarding!

Staff

CEO	Alysha Liu
Group Operations Manager	Richard Suchovsky
Principal Administrator & Director of Studies	Joanne Gao
Academic Coordinator	Dasha Vylegzhanina
Student Services (SSO)	Katherine Melgarejo
	Aliwassa Thanachaikan
	Saifon Bolza
	Haoren Wang
Teachers	Dasha Vylegzhanina
	Savva Papandony
	Faith Mullen
	Robert Ryan
	Jennifer Howell
	Phillip Burton
	Frederick Clark
	Anna Rua

The Australian Academy of Commerce – Teachers

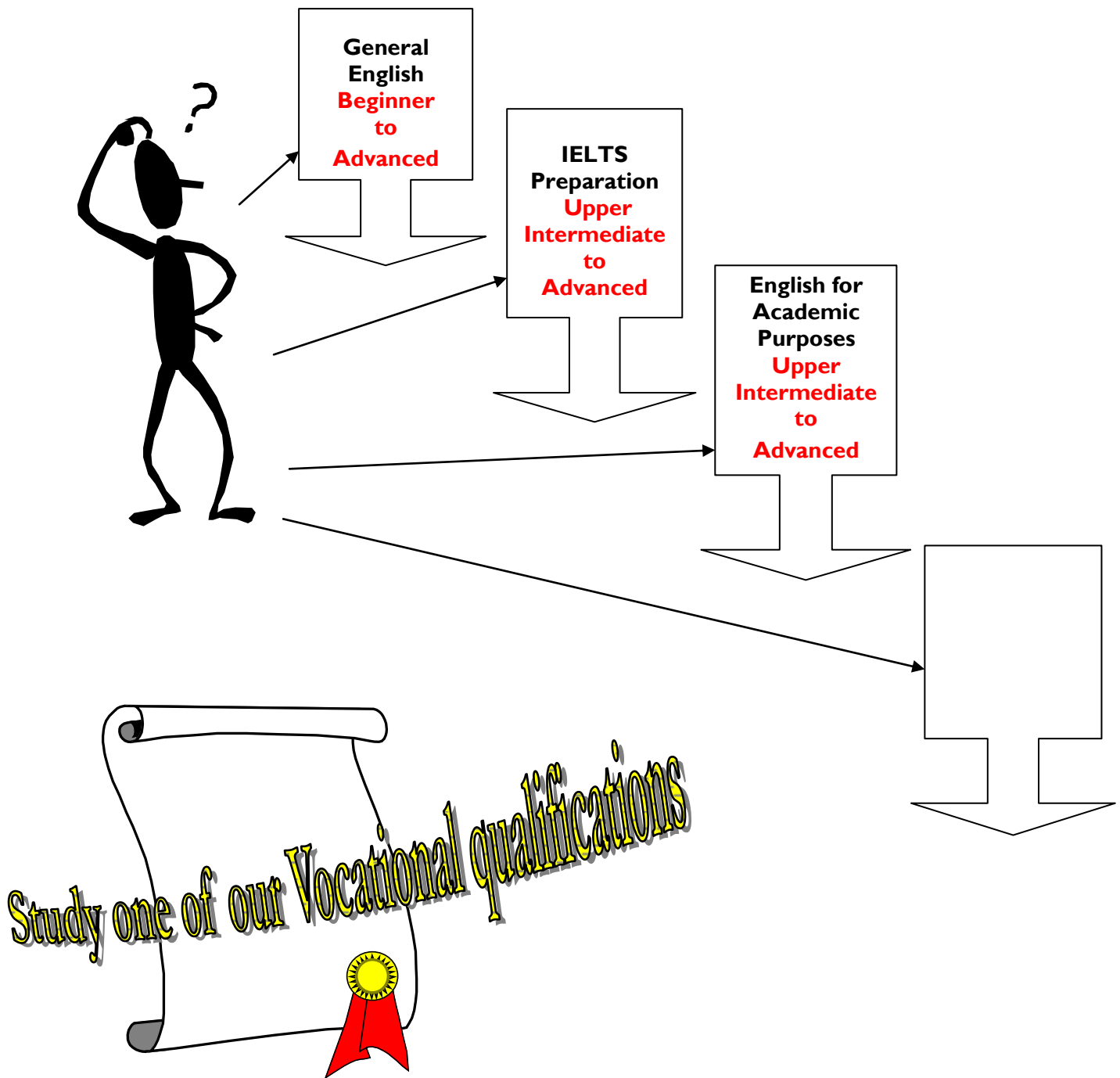
All teachers must have TESOL qualifications and relevant experience. They are to be familiar with the needs of international students and are committed to working as part of a team to achieve the education quality standards for our students.

Useful Contact Details

Doctor	St George Hospital Gray Street Kogarah
Dentist	Sydney Dental Hospital 2 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills
Optometrist	Any Specsavers (appointment required)
Hospital	St George Hospital, Gray Street, Kogarah
Department of Home Affairs	check http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/
Consulates	Check on the website

For more information about Sydney visit www.sydneycity.nsw.gov.au

Study Pathways



**Certificates
Programmes**

**Diploma or
Advanced
Diploma
Programmes**

**University
Undergraduate
Programmes**

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS:

- If you need to **extend or change, defer or suspend** your class, **talk to a Student Services Officer**. Fees may apply.
- If you need any support in your **personal, study or working life, talk to a Student Services Officer!**
- If you have concerns about your **attendance or academic results, talk to the Director of Studies!**
- In case of life threatening **emergency contact 000** for fire, police or ambulance! For non-life threatening emergencies contact:
 - Joanne Gao – M: 0424 360 526 E: joanne@aac.nsw.edu.au
 - Dasha Yakovenko – M: 0404 427 758 E: dasha@aac.nsw.edu.au
- Before starting classes you must do a **placement test** and **orientation session**.
- You **must attend at least 80% of your 20 hours of weekly classes** to meet your visa conditions. You will be **marked late** if you attend **more than 20 minutes after class starts**.
- If you are **sick** you **must provide a medical certificate** as proof of illness!
- You **must not fail** to meet **course progress requirements for two terms in a row**.
- **Weapons, drugs, alcohol and disrespectful behaviour and language is not allowed on campus**.
- You must **inform AAC staff** of any **change to your personal information** (phone number, email, address, etc) **within 7 days** of the change.
- **Fees** must be **paid before commencing study** and **1 term in advance**. **Late fees apply** for late payments.
- **Refunds may be available** by submitting a **Refund Application Form**. All refunds will be **paid to the person who made the payment within 28 days of the application being approved**. **Reasons for approving** a refund include:
 - Visa rejected/not extended by DHA
 - Student withdraws from study more than 28 days before the course starts
 - Any provisional requirements are not met by the deadline
- You **must have Overseas Student Health Care (OSHC)!** If you need help with this, **talk to a Student Services Officer!**
- If you have any problems that haven't been resolved in a way that makes you happy, the Overseas Student Ombudsman is the next person to talk to:
 - Email: Ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au
 - Phone: 1300 362 072
- If you **need free legal help, talk to Legal AID NSW** and if it is not private, your **Student Services Officer** can help you with this.

English Program Overview

Our General English program is open to all students. There are six levels from beginner to advanced. Our English for Academic Purposes is specifically designed for students who wish to go on to further educational courses (vocational or higher education). The IELTS Preparation program is designed for students wishing to undertake the IELTS exam in the future.

For the English and academic entry requirements for the English for Academic Purposes program, refer to the prospectus or the program description.

Program Extension and Repeating Programs

Extensions: If you need to extend your course, no additional study can commence until the primary course period is completed. Additional tuition fees charge applies.

Repeating: If you need to repeat any part of your program, additional administration fees apply. You are not able to transfer the fees already paid for other programs to cover these additional costs. Depending on the program there may be additional material fees.

Changing Classes or Programs

If you wish to change your class or program you must arrange it with the Academic Manager.

Changing Premises

The Academy will formally notify all students of any intention to change location with at least three weeks notice prior to any move or change of premises.

Notice Board

There are notice boards in strategic places around the campus. These contain information about:

- important announcements
- class and exam timetables including any changes to the normal routine
- Weekend and after class social activities
- Advice on problems, safety, medical and first aid
- Student mail sent care of the campus
- Shared accommodation
- Club announcements.
- Students with unsatisfactory attendance

We will also e-mail updates and information to you as required.

Student Card

The Australian Academy of Commerce issues all students with an identification card. Students on campus must carry their card with them at all times.

To obtain your student card complete the *Student Card Request Form* and give it to a SSO. Your student identification card will be ready in several days. This card is used on campus for identification and will enable you to get some student entry discounts. If your student card has been lost or stolen, the Academy will issue new card for a charge of \$25.

The Academy's student card does not entitle you to concession transport fees. Transport concession is not available to international students on a student visa.

Social Activities

Involving yourself in social activities is a great way to make friends, improve your English and enjoy your time in Australia. Check your email & notice boards for organised activities and excursions organised throughout the year.

Sports Activities

Sport is a great way to maintain physical fitness while you are studying. Students can become members of sporting teams or participate in a sporting special event.

Texts and References

Textbooks are used in most programs at the Academy. Teachers also use real-life and current materials from a variety of sources including on-line ESL resources..

Stationery and Equipment

Through our wireless network, you will have Internet access throughout your studies on campus for free! But you are expected to have your own laptop with mobile technology, stationery, calculators and other study equipment.

Lost and Found

If you lose or find something while on campus, please report it to Student Services. Please mark your name on all articles you use in the classroom. If you lose traveller's cheques or credit cards, report it to the appropriate provider immediately, you may also want to report it to the police.

Accommodation

Our Student Services Officers can assist students in arranging accommodation through homestay with the assistance of the Australian Home Stay Network (AHN) Sydney (<http://www.homestaynetwork.org>). Students arriving from offshore can also be met at the airport and taken directly to their accommodation.

The AHN fee structure is:

Placement Fee: \$240

Placement fee includes:

- Selection and training of Host
- System support during application process
- Ensuring that all appropriate authority clearances are in place
- Host residence visit and approval process
- Placement of Student (Student/Host preference matching)
- Follow up support if required at any time during placement
- Liaison with education institution and agent as appropriate

Airport Reception: \$110 - \$140 (Depending on state. Not available to all regional areas)

AHN can arrange for the student to be met at the airport on arrival and transported to their homestay family. This can be a great relief for students when first arriving in a new country with luggage and no knowledge of the public transport system and how to travel.

Weekly Host payment: Up to \$265 (Rates may change depending on student service level and Education Providers)

AHN offer the following products for Over 18 and Under 18 students:

- AHN Complete Homestay (Full Service) - 3 meals 7 days
- AHN Easy Homestay – 2 meals weekdays (breakfast & dinner) 3 meals weekends
- Partial Service - 1 meal per day or room only

AHN fees include insurance coverage and access to a 24 hour helpline.

For temporary or emergency accommodation AAC can also assist students in finding

accommodation through a variety of hostels and hotels in Sydney CBD and Kogarah depending on their request.

Please give the Academy 14 days notice if you require our staff to arrange Homestay accommodation for you. It is estimated that students who live alone spend a total of between AU\$250-\$450 per week on accommodation, food and other living expenses.

Support and Career Services

If you have a problem, talk to someone! Feel free to speak to your teacher, Student Services Manager (SSM), Operations Manager or any of the Student Services Officers (SSO). The team will all assist students who require assistance in adjusting to study and life in Australia. A lot of information is given in the student orientation session and in the Student Handbook. The SSOs are able to clarify important information &/or direct you to: legal services, emergency and health services, facilities and resources, complaints and appeals processes and student visa obligations (meeting course & attendance requirements).

Students are encouraged to discuss their academic performance and attendance record with their teacher(s), or the Academic Manager. Serious or complex matters will be directed to the Principal Administrator for clarification.

The Australian Academy of Commerce meets the required Safety Regulations and Council Requirements for you to have a safe and healthy place to study. Every person is expected to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and for that of anyone else who may be affected by their actions. If you have a health and safety issue, raise it with your teacher or at reception. Talk to us: we want to know!!

Counselling

The Academy provides the services of a qualified counsellor on campus part-time. If any student has concerns, whether personal or professional, and wishes to discuss these with a skilled and caring listener, please talk to Student Services to arrange an appointment. The counsellor will also make recommendations in relation to compassionate and compelling circumstances where this is required, for example in requests to defer studies, take leave, appeal a notice of intention to report, and so forth.

The counsellor is located in the city campus and appointments are necessary and can be arranged in person, through email or over the phone with the Student Services team.

Emergencies

In case of emergency, follow the fire drill instructions and exit map signs posted in the premises.

In case of any casualty, eg fainting, chest pain, a fall, loss of consciousness, asthma, diabetes, bleeding, burn, scald, insect bite or sting, please report it to a staff member immediately. A First Aid Kit is at the Reception Desk.

If the Academy needs to be evacuated the safety wardens, who will be wearing a red or yellow hat, will give you instructions.

Fire: If you can see or smell smoke or flames, tell the nearest staff member immediately. If the alarm sounds, listen and obey the teacher's instructions. With your teacher, walk to the nearest Fire Exit quietly and calmly. The teacher will mark the attendance register in a safe area to make sure all students present at the Academy are safe and accounted for.

Bomb Scare: Follow the staff's instructions.

Injury or accident: Report the injury or accident to your teacher or reception immediately. The Academy's First Aid Officers are listed on the notice board.

Building Alarms: Follow the staff's instructions.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS 24 HOURS: If you have any serious problems such as:

- Serious injury or illness

- You get lost or injured on an excursion
- You are a victim of severe verbal or psychological aggression
- You are physically assaulted
- You witness a serious accident or incident of violence
- You, or your family in your home country, are victims of natural disaster e.g. earthquake, flood, windstorm, hailstorm or extremes of temperature
- Any incident of fire, bomb threat, explosion, gas or chemical hazard
- You suffer from social issues e.g. drug use, sexual assault

IF YOUR LIFE IS IN DANGER CONTACT '000' IMMEDIATELY!

OTHERWISE PLEASE CONTACT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING IMMEDIATELY:

Joanne Gao – M: 0424360526 E: joanne@aac.nsw.edu.au

Dasha Yakovenko – M: 0404427758 E: dasha@aac.nsw.edu.au

Security

The Academy takes every care to provide a secure study environment. Please keep personal and valuable items with you at all times when on campus. The Academy is not liable for any loss of personal property. If you have any concerns for your safety or personal belongings notify reception immediately.

Critical Incident Policy

Australian Academy of Commerce recognises that a duty of care is owed to its students and that planning for the management of a critical incident is essential.

A critical incident is a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia) which causes extreme stress, fear or injury. This may include but is not limited to:

- Serious injury, illness or death of a student or staff
- Students or staff lost or injured on an excursion
- A missing student
- Severe verbal or psychological aggression
- Physical assault
- Student or staff witnessing a serious accident or incident of violence
- Natural disaster e.g. earthquake, flood, windstorm, hailstorm or extremes of temperature
- Fire, bomb threat, explosion, gas or chemical hazard
- Social issues e.g. drug use, sexual assault

Critical Incident Committee

The Student Services Officers with the QMT assist in the prevention and management of critical incidents at the Academy, or off campus in the case of an overseas student for whom the Academy has undertaken care responsibilities.

The responsibilities of the committee include:

- Risk assessment of hazards and situations which may require emergency action
- Analysis of requirements to address these hazards
- Establishment of liaison with all relevant emergency services e.g. Police, fire brigade, ambulance, hospital, poisons information centre, community health services
- 24 hour access to contact details for all relevant staff members needed in the event of a critical incident e.g. PEO, Operations Manager and student services officers
- Development of a critical incident plan for each critical incident identified
- Dissemination of planned procedures
- Organisation of practice drills
- Regular review of the critical incident plan
- Assisting with implementation of the critical incident plan
- Arranging appropriate staff development
- Budget allocation for emergencies

Critical Incident Plan

All critical incident plans assign responsibilities among relevant staff members; cover all the actions to be taken and timelines for doing so.

Immediate Action (within 24 hours)

- Identify the nature of the critical incident
- Notification of the critical incident committee/team leader
- Implement the appropriate management plan or action strategy
- Assignment of duties and resources to Academy staff
- Seeking advice & help from any necessary emergency services/hospital/medical services
- Dissemination of information to parents and family members
- Completion of a critical incident report
- Media response - the Principal will decide if required.
- Assess the need for support and counselling for those directly and indirectly involved

Additional Action (48–72 hours)

- Assess the need for support and counselling for those directly and indirectly involved (ongoing)
- Provide staff and students with factual information as appropriate
- Restore normal functioning and Academy delivery

Follow-up – monitoring, support, evaluation

- Identification of any other people who may be affected by critical incident and access of support services for affected community members
- Maintain contact with any injured/affected parties
- Provision of accurate information to staff and students where appropriate
- Evaluation of critical incident management
- Be aware of any possible longer term disturbances e.g. inquests, legal proceedings

Learning English

Orientation

Your orientation takes place following Registration upon arrival at the College and consists of:

English Placement Test: Students will be given a written English Placement Test and have an interview with our Academic Manager or other English teacher in order to determine their English level. This will be conducted in private and will require your concentration. We will also talk with you about your needs

Seminar: The seminar explains the Academy's policies and procedures; you will receive your Student Handbook as part of the induction. The Principal Administrator and/or delegated officers provide guidance to students in understanding their rights and obligations highlighted in the Student Handbook concerning:

- Course progress and attendance monitoring
- Course timetable & course content & learners' needs
- Requirements to complete the course or move to the next level
- Appeals policy and procedures
- Complaints policy and procedures
- Course deferment and suspension
- Course transfer policy
- Administration fees & refunds policy
- Student support services including legal services
- 24 Hour emergency contact details & health services
- AusAcademy Online (student access) – to log in follow the simple 3 steps:
 1. Open the AusAcademy website: www.aac.nsw.edu.au
 2. At the top of the page find the icon Student login

3. Your username is your student ID and password is your date of birth in format (DDMMYYYY)
 4. Once you log in, you can change your username and password if you wish
- Any additional questions you may have will be answered accordingly.

Administration: Students are required to fill 5 different forms - Registration, Statutory Declaration, Student Handbook receipt, Student Card Request, and Publication of Photographs approval. In addition they will be requested to complete Student Agent Performance and Induction Feedback questionnaires.

Tour: You will be taken on a tour of the ELICOS Campus and surrounding area.

When attending the orientation day please remember the following points:

Punctuality: You must **not** be late for class. If you are 20 minutes late from the start of the session you will be marked absent for the session.

Illness: Notify your teacher and report to reception. The Academy should be notified that you will not be attending classes and a medical certificate is required on your first day back for proof of illness. This is a government regulation.

Classes: Follow the teacher's directions and participate in all class activities. Students have the opportunity to discuss their ideas so that they can widen their knowledge of their study.

Field Trips: Classes may go on a field trip with their teacher. This can be for part of the day or a whole day. The cost is usually between \$5.00 and \$20.00 for each trip. You can often obtain a discount by using the Academy student card. Attendance on excursions is **compulsory** as they form an important part of the language and learning process and contribute to course work in general.

Extending student visas

Student visas can be extended under certain circumstances, but these must comply with the regulations set by the Department of Home Affairs. Each student who needs to extend their visa must make an appointment with DHA to discuss their individual case. Student visas are usually extended to enable you to complete your studies at an approved institution. You need to apply four weeks before your current visa expires.

Identify Learners' Needs

The Australian Academy of Commerce ('Academy') endeavours to identify, assess and provide learning support to its clients for all qualification currently on its scope of registration. This will include negotiating, adjusting and planning appropriate learning and assessment strategies to meet the needs of individual learners.

Considering the Academy's target group it is fundamental that the following learning needs are identified prior to enrolment, explained and planned at orientation, and implemented during the learning period:

- English language levels
- Literacy and numeracy levels
- Learning styles – ie preference to auditory, visual, tactile, reading/writing
- Physical ability
- Intellectual ability
- Cultural or ethnic background

The Academy will ensure that it has access to the staff, facilities, equipment, training and assessment materials required to provide the training &/or assessment services within its scope of registration and scale of operations, to accommodate client numbers, client needs, delivery methods and assessment.

Course Progress and Academic Non Performance

We recommend that students:

- Speak and write in English as much as possible. Ask for explanation if you do not understand.
- Enrol in the correct Grade of English
- Attend all scheduled classes
- Understand all class activities and complete them correctly in consultation with your teachers
- Complete all assessment tasks as your own work: do not copy others work

Australian Academy of Commerce will monitor and record student academic progress throughout their period of enrolment.

Course progress is monitored during the term and after the completion of term. Students who are having academic difficulty are encouraged to seek help through their Teacher. If preferred, a Student Services Officer ('SSO') on behalf of the student can also assist in the process of class and course completion by presenting their difficulty to the appropriate Teacher.

When a student does not meet the course requirements for two consecutive terms they may be reported to DHA via PRISMS.

Requirements for achieving satisfactory course progress

In order to ensure a student's course progress, the Academy will monitor academic performance in each class they are enrolled in using the Academy Learning Management System (LMS). All students are required to study full time (20 hours per week). The Academy records and monitors daily attendance and assessment tasks.

Students are expected to improve their English skills. Students who are not improving will be asked to discuss their progress with the Academic Manager who may implement the intervention strategy below.

Intervention Strategy

This is an action plan to ensure students improve their English. It offers students additional assistance to help their English. The Academy provides Students with access to the right support which can be both academic and non academic.

Students who have been advised that the Intervention Strategy has been implemented or are experiencing difficulties should discuss their problems with the Academic Manager. For non-academic issues the Student Services Manager or Operations Manager can assist and make arrangements for additional services such as professional counselling.

Intervention Strategy Procedure:

- An appointment must be made with the Academic Manager once the intervention strategy has been implemented or for a student to discuss the problems they are experiencing.
- At the appointment, with assistance from the Academic Manager the student will be provided with the plan for completion.
- Once agreed, the student will sign and receive copies of the agreed intervention plan and any related documents.
- All records will be stored electronically and in paper form in the student file identifying any amendments made to the students course status and study plan.

Completion within expected duration of study

At all times students are in a position to complete their studies within the duration specified in their CoE, unless certain circumstances apply.

If a student chooses to study at less than full-time in a particular study period, they will have to make sure that they can still complete the course in time. If a student completes their course early they must ensure their tuition fees for the course are paid in full and the Academy must report this to the Department of Home Affairs (DHA), and the duration of the student's visa will most likely be reduced.

Attendance

The Academy monitors students' compliance with student visa conditions for attendance. The Academy counsels students who are at risk of failing to meet attendance requirements. We report students who are not meeting the attendance requirements.

Participants must attend a minimum of 20 contact hours per week to meet their student visa requirements to gain maximum benefit from the classes. Students must attend all scheduled face-to-face teaching sessions each week.

At the commencement of each session, your teacher will provide a "sign-on" attendance sheet that must be initialled on arrival and departure with the time of arrival and leaving accurately recorded. Your Teach must also sign to confirm the figures are accurate.

Should you be unable to attend classes for reasons such as illness or serious family problems, you are required to contact the Australian Academy of Commerce and explain your situation and to complete a leave form.

A medical certificate from a registered general practitioner is required if the student is ill or injured. This will be recorded on the attendance record and retained in your personal file. We must record actual student attendance, which means that even when a medical certificate is provided, students will be marked absent for the duration of their non-attendance. Students must provide a copy of their medical certificate upon return to class and keep the original for future records.

Students who have been absent for 5 consecutive days without approval, who have not been consistently attending their course or whose academic results are unsatisfactory will be contacted by Student Services Manager to arrange an interview to discuss ongoing participation in the class.

Students with 80% average course attendance or less or with unsatisfactory academic performance on a semester basis and with outstanding fees may be reported to DHA via PRISMS as required.

Assessments

Students will do monthly progress tests to see how well they are learning each week's topics. Every 4 weeks a report will be made on the student's progress and any students not passing the progress test will be 'at risk' and meet with the Director of Studies to see how this can be fixed.

To meet satisfactory course progress and to continue to a higher level of study, students must pass their course 'exit test'. Students who do not pass this test, including those who do not do the test when they should, will not be able to go to a higher level and must repeat their current level until they do pass and will receive a warning of unsatisfactory course progression. If a student does not do their exit test, they have one week to make a new time to do it with the Director of Studies or they will be marked as failed.

Students who do not pass their exit test (60% of higher marked) will receive a warning letter for not satisfactory progression. Students who are still 'at risk' during week 4 or 8 of their 2nd attempt at the course will receive a second warning. Students will be expected to meet with the Director of Studies when they are 'at risk' or receive a warning so they can get help in meeting the course requirements.

Students who fail to successfully exit their course twice (maximum of 24 weeks total time) will receive a written notice of intention to report for unsatisfactory course progress. Students who are repeating a course or who are identified as being at a high level for their current course are able to do the exit test before the end of the 12 week course without being reported for unsatisfactory course progress.

Students have the right of appeal an assessment result by writing to the Principal Administrator within two weeks of assessment. In the event that you are not satisfied with an assessment decision or process, the following procedure applies:

1. Discuss the matter with the teacher;
2. If you're still unsatisfied, get an Improvement Action Record form from the Principal Administrator, complete it, then return it to them.
3. Your appeal will be examined by the Principal Administrator and Director of Studies
4. If the matter remains unresolved then the Principal Administrator will go higher to the Academic Manager;
5. If the matter is still unresolved, then the student would be advised to take the matter to

an independent party such as the Overseas Student Ombudsman.

Copyright

All student work must be original. It is illegal to reproduce other people's work without their permission. For more information see the *Copyright Act 1968* (Commonwealth). Where the Australian Academy of Commerce would like to display, use or reproduce your work to promote the Academy or a program, you will be provided with a form that outlines your rights and our obligations.

Academy Wide Policies & Procedures

Expectations of Students

Everyone at the Academy should show respect and courtesy to others at all times. Every person on campus has the same right to deliver or receive education in a safe, supportive environment.

Behaviour: Be considerate and always show respect to others around the campus.

Dress Code: Dress in neat, clean and freshly washed clothes with shoes that protect your feet.

Hygiene: It is expected that all members of the student body **wash daily** for hygienic purposes and to avoid others' discomfort.

Language: The English language is encouraged to be used on campus at all times.

Mobile Phones: Turn your mobile phone **off** before you go to class or exams.

Food and Drink: Do not eat or drink in the classrooms, toilets or hallways.

Smoking: Smoking is strictly prohibited at the campus. Please observe the **No Smoking** signs. It is illegal to buy tobacco products if you are less than 18 years old. It is also illegal to buy tobacco products for someone who is under 18 years old.

Alcohol: Students are not to consume alcohol on campus unless it is an organised social function where there is staff supervision.

Illegal Drugs: It is illegal to bring prohibited drugs into the Academy. Any student found with prohibited drugs will be reported directly to the police and could expect to have their visa cancelled.

Weapons: It is illegal to carry weapons in Australia. Any student found with weapons will be reported directly to the police and could expect to have their visa cancelled.

Student Complaint and Appeal Policy and Procedure

A complaint presented by an individual, or a group, based on the opinion that they are, or have been, receiving treatment that differs from the treatment received by other individuals or groups are taken seriously and resolution obtained to the agreement of both parties where possible.

The complaints and appeals policy of the Academy shall ensure that all formal complaints are dealt with in a constructive and timely manner at no cost to the complainant. The policy ensures the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaint and appeal process and that complaints and requests for an appeal are acknowledged in writing and finalised as soon as practicable.

If a student has a problem at the Academy, e.g. involving the quality of relationship with another person(s) or any aspect of studies, the student may wish to ask to speak with his/her teacher or a Student Services Officer.

All formal complaints or appeals must be presented by collecting and completing the *Improvement Action Record* (IAR) form at reception. The Student Services Officer will assist the student in recording the complaint or appeal on the IAR form. The IAR is to be given to the relevant QMT member (Principal, Academic Manager, Compliance Manager, Operations Manager and/or Student Services Manager) as soon as the form has been completed and the relevant member is to investigate and make (at least) initial

recommendations/actions within 10 business days. The IAR is reported in the scheduled QMT or Team Meeting to reach an acceptable outcome. The details of the actions required are specified on the IAR and in the minutes of the meeting.

Complaints Process

1. Generally, complaints are to be submitted to the SSO who will record the date, complainer and the substance of the complaint. The SSO can assist the student in completing the IAR if required. Note: Anonymous complaints may be issued, however it is not possible to provide further information as to the outcome of these complaints and where the situation is not straight forward it will not be possible to gain further insights and/or evidence, leaving the complaint in the area of anonymous feedback.
2. The SSO will inform the Quality Management Member – QMT (Student Services Manager, Academic Manager, Operations Manager, Principal, Admission Manager and other managers) daily of the receipt of any complaints.
3. The QMT will attempt to resolve the complaint within 5 business days. The outcome of their discussion will be recorded in the ‘complaints log’.
4. Where appropriate, other persons may be interviewed to verify the issues complained of, and/or further evidence may be requested.
5. Where no further information is required, the QMT member will resolve the issue and inform the complainer of the outcome within 10 business days.
6. Where further information is required, the QMT will resolve the issue within 10 business days of receipt of the complaint and inform the complainer of the outcome within 5 business days.
7. If the investigation is going to take further than 10 business days, or there is no satisfactory resolution, the QMT will refer the complaint to an external agency – either the Overseas Student Ombudsman or other independent person(s).
8. Students must be informed of their ability to appeal internally any decision made when communicating the outcome to the student.
9. Students who are unsatisfied at the outcome are invited to take up their issue with the Overseas Student Ombudsman (www.ombudsman.gov.au or 1300 362 072).
10. In instances where it may take longer than 60 days to resolve such an issue – for instance where a student is overseas or otherwise unavailable – all parties involved in the issue will be informed in writing of the reason why this much time is required and an update will be sent fortnightly until the issue is resolved.

External Process

If the student is not satisfied with the QMT’s decision, s/he is entitled to appeal and be heard by an Overseas Students Ombudsman. The Overseas Students Ombudsman is free and independent. Students can find out more at www.ombudsman.gov.au or phone 1300 362 072. The student **must continue to attend classes and maintain their enrolment** while the complaints and appeals process is ongoing.

Also, students can contact outside agencies regarding their grievance. The *National Training Complaints Hotline* 1800 000 674 can be contacted at anytime during the process of grievance as well as the *NSW Department of Fair Trading*, General Customer Service Inquiries on 133 220 for commercial disputes. Students have the right to be represented by a nominee if they wish or seek external or legal advice. A student may also choose someone to be present with them at the time of interview.

Occupational Health and Safety

There are signs around the campus explaining the proper use of equipment and facilities including:

- Toilet facilities
- Recreation areas
- Sitting at a computer or desk
- Equipment usage
- If you are aware of an accident or faulty equipment please notify a teacher or SSO. If you have any questions about safety, prevention of accidents or the correct use of equipment please asks one of your teachers.

Non-Harassment Policy

It is a policy of the Australian Academy of Commerce that all employees and students are entitled

to a harassment free work environment and will have management support in reporting any type of harassment or related inappropriate behaviour they may encounter.

Harassment is defined as verbal or physical conduct creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. If you experience or witness any type of harassment or inappropriate behaviour, you should use the following procedure:

- Deal with it immediately, advising the person that you believe the behaviour to be inappropriate and you would like it to stop.
- If you prefer not to discuss the matter with the person, or the person fails to respect your request you should report the incident to the Academy's Principal Administrator.
- If a student is still unsatisfied, they may approach a relevant external agency. A list of contacts is provided within this handbook. You can also ask a SSO for assistance in contacting a relevant agency.

In all reported instances, a prompt, thorough, fair investigation will take place giving careful consideration to protect the rights and dignity of all people involved.

Non-Bullying Policy

Bullying at work is any form of behaviour which is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting or is an abuse or misuse of power intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure individuals or groups. Bullying leads to stress and then to illness and behavioural problems if prolonged. [www.workershealth.com.au].

The Australian Academy of Commerce is committed against bullying and the organisation will not tolerate such behaviour. Any complaints of bullying must be pursued through the grievance procedure, although in this instance must be directed by submitting an IAR form directly to the Principal Administrator stating the surrounding circumstances, as all bullying complaints need to be treated confidentially and promptly. Any student found to be bullying a colleague following an investigation will be counselled and handed a warning letter stipulating their unacceptable behaviour. All facts and the outcome will be recorded in conjunction with the IAR form. Bullying will be monitored by the QMT.

Access and Equity

Discrimination – is defined as any decision or action, which specifically excludes a person or group of people from a benefit or opportunity, or significantly reduces their chances of obtaining it, because a personal characteristic irrelevant to the situation is applied as a barrier.

It is against the law to discriminate against any person associated with the Australian Academy of Commerce because of race, religion, politics, creed, nationality, gender, sexuality, marital status or disability. The Academy is committed to supporting the needs of all groups within the organisation.

Privacy Policy

We will not disclose any information that we gather about our staff or students to any third party as per the 'Information Privacy Principles' in Section 14 of the *Privacy Act 1988* (Commonwealth). This Act imposes obligations on private education providers in the collection, storage, use and disclosure of personal information.

We are obliged to tell the student the purpose of collecting personal information, who receives this information and where it is held. We must also provide ongoing rights to access this information about the individual and make corrections. We are also obliged to protect and maintain accurate personal and private information and not disclose it without the knowledge and approval of the individual concerned.

Information the Officer of the Academy asks a student will only be necessary for the purposes of course enrolment, learning and study records.

No student information is shared with another organisation. If staff or student information is required by a third party we will obtain written consent from the relevant staff or student prior to release of any information.

Should a student seek access to their information we have a documented procedure requiring authorisation before this can occur.

However, a student's personal information provided to the Academy may be made available to the Commonwealth and State departments, as well as the Tuition Protection Scheme (TPS) Director, pursuant to obligations under the *ESOS (Education Services for Overseas Students) Act 2000*, the *National Code, VET Act (NSW) 2005* and other offices of the NSW Department of Education & Training.

Confidential files of each student include:

- current enrolment status
- progress reports
- assessment records
- outstanding fees

You are able to access your personal files by request to the SSO by showing your student card and filling the Student File Access Request Form.

Personal Details

If you change your address, you must inform the Academy within seven days. If you do not formally notify accordingly, those with a student visa will be breaching their obligation.

Disciplinary Procedures

If you are found acting not in accordance with the Academy's Student Handbook you can be disciplined by staff after consultation with the Principal Administrator.

Expulsion

The Australian Academy of Commerce reserves the right to expel students found to be involved in illegal activities as defined by the laws of New South Wales and the Commonwealth of Australia. For more information about what constitutes behaviour that would lead to expulsion speak to a Student Services Officer.

Course Fees

The Enrolment Fee are payable upon enrolment and are non-refundable. Full fees must be received before your course commences and will be held by the Academy in accordance with the *ESOS Act*. At all times, fees must be paid for at least **one term in advance** of the term currently being studied. Please note that there will be a 3% surcharge for any credit card payment to the Academy.

Late Payment Penalty

A late payment penalty will apply if the tuition fee is overdue.

- \$100.00 if overdue within 7 days
- \$200.00 if overdue over 7 days
- Should fees remain overdue for more than 14 days the Academy will inform the student in writing of its intention to report for non-payment of fees to DHA via PRISMS.

Refund Policy

Under Standard 7 of the National Code 2018, except for special circumstances, registered providers are restricted from enrolling and transferring students prior to completing the first six months of the principal course of study.

In the unlikely event that Australian Academy of Commerce ('Academy') is unable to deliver an enrolled course in full, students will be offered a refund of all the course moneys paid to date for this course. The refund will be paid within two weeks (10 business days) of the day on which the course ceased being provided. Alternatively, students may be offered enrolment in an alternative course offered by Australian Academy of Commerce at no additional cost. Students have the right to choose whether they would prefer a full refund of course fees, or to accept a place in another course. If students choose placement in another course, the Academy will ask them to sign a document to indicate that they accept the placement.

If the Academy is unable to provide a refund or place students in an alternative course the Tuition

Protection Scheme (TPS) will attempt to place students in a suitable alternative course or, if this is not possible, they will be eligible for a refund as calculated by the TPS Director. Further information is to be obtained as required from the official TPS website <https://tps.gov.au> or phone number on 02 6271 3440.

To apply for a refund – a **Refund Application Form** or **Agent Refund Application Form** (if applying through an agent) – must be completed by the student or approved agent and submitted to a Student Services Officer. Australian Academy of Commerce will issue refunds in advance payment of tuition fees within 28 days when:

- ♦ Tuition fees are refunded in full; less 5% of the total amount of pre-paid tuition fees (up to a maximum amount of \$500) if your application for a student visa is rejected by DHA (the official visa refusal letter from DHA must be provided as evidence);
- ♦ If you withdraw from your course 28 days or more prior to the commencement of your course (*commencement of course* is defined in this policy and procedure as the course start date as per the original Application Form submitted by the student or an agent and not subsequent enrolment changes to the starting date), 80% of your tuition fee will be refunded;
- ♦ If you withdraw from your course less than 28 days prior to the commencement of your course, a fee equal to one term tuition will be charged;;
- ♦ If you applied for a visa extension and it was **not** granted by DHA; the unused tuition fees are refunded in full;
- ♦ If you are a current student and withdraw in writing 28 days or more prior to the commencement of the following term the Academy shall refund the unused tuition fees;
- ♦ If a student is provisionally enrolled, on condition of achieving evidence of acceptable English Language Proficiency, and the student cannot achieve the required level, all tuition fees and charges corresponding to the course will be refunded less a charge of AU\$300.

We will not issue refunds for:

- ♦ Application fee, accommodation assistance & airport reception fees;
- ♦ If you withdraw from your course after the course has commenced;
- ♦ If you withdraw from your course not in accordance with your visa obligations and behaved not in good faith;
- ♦ Change in student's work hours;
- ♦ Inconvenience of travel to class;
- ♦ Moving interstate or overseas;
- ♦ Job change or retrenchment;
- ♦ Students who leave before completing the course &/or qualification;
- ♦ If a student becomes a permanent resident of Australia during the program. No guarantees of university or other pathway places will apply to such students;
- ♦ If DHA has rejected your student visa application based on their finding that you have supplied fraudulent documents along with your student visa application.

Eligible refunds will be refunded within 28 days of receipt of written notification. Australian Academy of Commerce will provide the student a statement that explains how the amount has been worked out.

Refund will only be given to the person who paid the tuition fees. For example, if the tuition fee was paid by an agent or parents, the money will only be refunded to either the agent or parents.

This written agreement, and the right to make complaints and seek appeals of decisions and action under various processes, does not affect the rights of the student to take action under the *Australian Consumer Law* if the *Australian Consumer Law* applies.

http://consumerlaw.gov.au/files/2015/06/ACL_framework_overview.pdf

Course deferral, suspension and cancellation

The Academy team is committed to assessing and recording all deferments, suspensions or cancellations of study, ensuring that students within the process are informed of their rights and provided with due care and where relevant opportunities for appeal.

Students are able to defer or temporarily suspend their studies during their course only in certain circumstances, on the grounds of compassionate or compelling circumstances. Compelling or compassionate circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to

- attend classes;
- Serious illness or death of a family member necessitating a return to the student's home country;
 - Serious injury;
 - Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the student's studies;
 - A traumatic experience which could include: involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports);
 - Where the registered provider was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit;
 - Not availability of required subjects in a particular term;
 - Inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to not achieving the required entry English language level; or
 - Inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa; or
 - Any behaviour identified as resulting in expelling students for serious breaches of discipline and visa obligations as well as failure to pay tuition fees on time.

Students must specify the duration and reason for the deferral and visa cancellation may be initiated by DHA if the deferral is for more than one term. Australian Academy of Commerce will enter a Student Course Variation to PRISMS.

Students may also have their enrolment deferred or suspended due to misbehaviour which can also be grounds for cancellation of studies. Before imposing the suspension or cancellation the Academy will:

- Inform the overseas student of that intention and the reasons for doing so, in writing
- Advise the overseas student of their right to appeal through the provider's internal complaints and appeals process, in accordance with Standard 10 (Complaints and appeals), within 20 working days.
- The student **must continue to attend classes and maintain the enrolment** while the complaints and appeals process is ongoing, unless the overseas student's health or wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, is likely to be at risk.

Students must complete and submit a "Deferment & Suspension Application Form" to the Student Services Officer requesting to defer or temporarily suspend their studies, together with appropriate documentary evidence supporting their application (for example, a medical certificate).

The Student Services Officer will pass the application to the Administration Manager who will assess the application and make a decision. The Administration Manager or delegated officer will notify the student of the decision within 10 business days of lodgement. If the application for deferral or suspension is approved, the Academy will notify the student in writing and the Academy will also notify DHA via PRISMS of the details of student deferral or suspension of studies.

If the application is refused the student will receive written notification of the decision and the reasons for the decision and is notified of their right to appeal the decision using the Student Complaint and Appeal Procedure in the Student Handbook. The Academy will only notify DHA of a change to the enrolment status when the complaints and appeals process has been completed. Students must be aware that deferring, suspending or cancelling the enrolment may affect their student visa.

Students must be aware that deferring, suspending or cancelling the enrolment may affect their student visa.

Academic misconduct

All students are expected to maintain high standards of academic honesty and integrity. Academic misconduct is defined as attempts by students to cheat, plagiarize or otherwise act dishonestly in undertaking an assessment task, or assisting other students to do so. Students are considered guilty of cheating if they seek to gain advantage by unfair means such as copying another students' work, or in any way mislead a lecturer or tutor about their knowledge, or the amount of original work they have done.

Student's responsibilities:

Examinations:

- a) Students must not help or receive assistance from other students
- b) Students must not request the loan of or lend materials or devices to other students

- c) Students must not bring any materials into the examination room other than those specified for that examination
- d) Students must not use computer software or other devices during an examination other than those specified.

A student may be excluded from a final examination in a unit for any of the following reasons:

- Unauthorised absence from class.
- Failure to meet unit requirements, for example non-submission of assignments or failure to attend class or mid-semester tests.
- Academic misconduct
- General misconduct (see below)

Other assessment tasks:

- a) Students must not copy or paraphrase any document, audio-visual material, computer-based material or artistic piece from another source except in accordance with the conventions of the field of study
- b) Students must not use another person's concepts, results or conclusions and pass them off as their own
- c) In cases where the assessment tasks intended to be individual work not group work, students must not prepare an assignment collaboratively and then submit work that is substantially the same as another student's assessment.
- d) Students must not ask another person to produce an assessable item for them.

Australian Academy of Commerce's responsibilities:

Procedural fairness

1. Students must be treated fairly, with dignity and with due regard to their privacy
2. Students are to be regarded as innocent of the alleged misconduct until they have either admitted to it or been found by proper inquiry of the student conduct committee to have so behaved.
3. Past misconduct is not evidence that a student has behaved in the same manner again.
4. Each case is dealt with on its own merits and according to its own circumstances with the proviso that the first instance of misconduct will be penalised more leniently than subsequent instances of misconduct.

Penalties

1. Penalties imposed will take into account the nature and the extent of the misconduct
2. Penalties imposed will take into account the students' stage in the program
3. Penalties imposed will take into account the conventions of the field of study
4. A student's second offence is penalised more severely than their first offence and a third offence will result in exclusion from the Australian Academy of Commerce.
5. The following penalties may be imposed: a warning, a reduction in grades, receiving zero for an assessment event, failing the unit, exclusion from the Australian Academy of Commerce.

Notification and appeal

1. Students must be notified in writing of penalties as a consequence of academic misconduct
2. The grounds for appeal are:
 - a) procedural irregularities, and/or
 - b) factual errors on which the decision was based and which were of such magnitude as to invalidate the decision
3. Appeals must be lodged in writing with the PEO or Operations Manager within 20 working days of the date of the student being notified of the consequence. The process will commence within 10 working days from the date of receipt of the student's appeal. The student **must continue to attend classes and maintain the enrolment** while the complaints and appeals process is ongoing.

General misconduct

Students are expected to respect other students, staff and property so that learning and teaching can take place freely, safely and without impediment due to the misconduct of others.

General misconduct is where a student: acts dishonestly; harasses other students or staff; interferes with students or staff; prevents or disrupts learning; disobeys/fails to comply with contractual or legal requirements; misuses, damages or steals Australian Academy of Commerce property or the

property of others; alters/defaces documents or records; prejudices the good name of Australian Academy of Commerce, or otherwise acts in an improper manner.

Australian Academy of Commerce will report all criminal acts committed by its students to the relevant authorities. The following examples indicate the kinds of behaviour which constitute student misconduct. They are for illustrative purposes and are not intended to be exhaustive. Student misconduct occurs when a student:

- (a) Contravenes any rules or regulations set by Australian Academy of Commerce;
- (b) Prejudices the good name or reputation of the Australian Academy of Commerce;
- (c) Prejudices the good order and governance, or interferes with the freedom of other people to pursue their studies, carry out their functions or participate in the life within Australian Academy of Commerce;
- (d) Fails to comply with conditions agreed in the contract;
- (e) Wilfully disobeys or disregards any lawful order or direction;
- (f) Refuses to identify him/herself when lawfully asked to do so by an officer of Australian Academy of Commerce;
- (g) Fails to comply with any penalty imposed for breach of discipline;
- (h) Misbehaves in a class, meeting or other activity under the control or supervision of Australian Academy of Commerce, or on act premises or other premises to which the student has access as a student of Australian Academy of Commerce;
- (i) Obstructs any member of staff in the performance of their duties;
- (j) Acts dishonestly in relation to admission to Australian Academy of Commerce;
- (k) Knowingly makes any false or misleading representation about things that concern the student as a student of Australian Academy of Commerce or breaches any of Australian Academy of Commerce's rules;
- (l) Alters any documents or records;
- (m) Harasses or intimidates another student, a member of staff, a visitor to act, or any other person while the student is engaged in study or other activity as an act student, because of race, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, sexual preference, disability, age, political conviction, religious belief or for any other reason;
- (n) Breaches any trust or confidence of Australian Academy of Commerce;
- (o) Misuses any facility in a manner which is illegal or which is or will be detrimental to the rights or property of others. This includes the misuse, in any way, of any computing or communications equipment or capacity to which the student has access at or away from Australian Academy of Commerce premises while acting as an Australian Academy of Commerce student, in a manner which is illegal or which is or will be detrimental to the rights or property of others;
- (p) Steals, destroys or damages a facility or property of Australian Academy of Commerce or for which Australian Academy of Commerce is responsible; or
- (q) Is guilty of any improper conduct.

Penalties for general misconduct

- i. Penalties imposed will take into account the nature and the extent of the misconduct
- ii. A student's second offence is penalised more severely than their first offence and a third offence will result in exclusion from Australian Academy of Commerce.

If the student admits to the alleged misconduct, the PEO or Operations Manager may impose one or both of the following:

- A charge for the cost of damage to facilities and equipment
- Temporary exclusion from Australian Academy of Commerce.

The PEO or Operations Manager may impose the penalty of permanent exclusion from Australian Academy of Commerce in the case of physical or verbal abuse of students or staff of Australian Academy of Commerce, repeated or severe misconduct, or in the case of criminal acts.

Notification and appeal

- i. Students must be notified in writing of penalties as a consequence of general misconduct
- ii. The grounds for appeal are:
 - Procedural irregularities, and/or
 - Factual errors on which the decision was based and which were of such magnitude as to invalidate the decision

- Appeals must be lodged in writing with the PEO or Operations Manager within 20 working days of the date of the student being notified of the consequence. The process will commence within 10 working days from the date of receipt of the student's appeal. The student **must continue to attend classes and maintain the enrolment** while the complaints and appeals process is ongoing.

Re-commencement of studies after holiday break

A student who does not return after holiday break and is not contactable has 'inactively' advised the Academy of his/her intention not to continue studying. Under Section 19(1) of the ESOS Act, the registered provider must notify DHA via PRISMS of termination of accepted student's studies within 14 days of the event occurring.

There is no requirement to send a Written Notice of Intention to report letter and observe the associated appeals requirements, OR to notify the student of the intention to cancel their studies as this action is not against the student's will.

Notices of withdrawal are not official until received by the Australian Academy of Commerce in writing.

Transferring to another Organisation

From July 2007 providers are restricted from enrolling transferring students prior to the student completing six months of their 'principal course of study'. This policy details the procedures for assessing applications to transfer within this period. Students who have studied longer than this period can apply as normal and no letter of release need to be sighted or produced.

This policy is to ensure that the Academy does not enrol any transferring international student prior to the completion of six months of their principal course of study being completed unless that student has a valid letter of release agreeing to such a transfer.

The principal course of study in the package of courses is the highest course enrolled. If a student has not completed six months at the highest course enrolled, the student will not be granted a letter of release, except under compassionate or exceptional circumstances as determined by the Admin Manager or Operations Manager. Also the Academy will not provide a release letter when there is an outstanding amount still owed in course fees or that it is suspected that they are seeking transfer only to avoid being reported to DHA for failure to meet academic progress or attendance

The Admin Manager or Operations Manager will make the final decision as to whether to **refuse** a letter of release for any student. The Academy will provide the reasons in writing for refusing the request and must be informed of his/her right to appeal (National Code Standard 10). AAC will not finalise the student's refusal status in PRISMS until the appeal finds in favour of the Academy, or the overseas student has chosen not to access the complaints and appeals processes within the 20 working day period, or the overseas student withdraws from the process.

However if the request for transfer in the restricted period is detrimental to the student, the Academy may make an exemption and provide a letter of release. Any letter of release granted is issued at no cost to the student and we shall advise the student of the need to contact DHA to seek advice on whether a new student visa is required.

Student must apply for a letter of release using the **Student Transfer Application Form**. The Admin Manager or Student Services Manager will consider and respond to applications for a letter of release within 5 days of their lodgement.

Procedure for assessing students wishing to transfer into the Academy

The Academy will not knowingly enrol a student wishing to transfer from another registered provider's course prior to the student completing six months of his or her principal course of study except where:

- The releasing registered provider, or the course in which the overseas student is enrolled, has ceased to be registered;
- The releasing registered provider has had a sanction imposed on its registration by the ESOS agency that prevents the overseas student from continuing his or her course at that registered provider;

- The releasing registered provider has agreed to the overseas student's release and recorded the date of effect and reason for release in PRISMS;
- Any government sponsor of the overseas student considers the change to be in the overseas student's best interests and has provided written support for the change

In the event that the Academy knowingly enrolls a student wishing to transfer from another registered provider's course prior to the student completing six months of his or her principal course of study, documentary evidence of at least one of the four conditions listed above must be obtained and placed in the transferring student's file.

The Academy will not seek to enrol a student who has not yet completed six months of their principal course of study with another registered provider unless the requirements of the National Code 2018 are met and then only in accordance with this procedure.

- An application is received from a student who is on-shore and who has indicated that they are currently studying at another institution. If they are under 18, the Academy will automatically refuse the application.
- Upon receiving signed application form the Academy will issue a valid Letter of Offer or Conditional Letter of Offer to the prospective student.
- Prospective student submit the Letter of Offer or Conditional Letter of Offer to the current RTO from he/she would like to transfer out. The RTO will assess the application for letter of release and make decision whether to issue letter of release or not. Note if they are in receipt of a government scholarship, they should provide a written support from the government agreeing to the change which will stand in lieu of any letter of release.
- If a letter of release or a government document is received and the student has no outstanding fees to be paid to the prior institution or other outstanding matters of concern, the application proceeds as for all off-shore applicants.
- If no satisfactory letter of release is obtained from such students, the application process is halted and the student informed that they are unable to transfer at this time. They are welcome to re-activate their application when the 6 month period of the principal course has been passed.

Procedure for assessing applications wishing to transfer out of the Academy

Students must apply for a letter of release using the *Student Transfer Application Form*. The PEO will consider and respond to applications for a letter of release within 14 days of their lodgement.

A letter of release will normally be granted in the following situations:

1. Australian Academy of Commerce fails to deliver the course as outlined in the written agreement; or
2. The student has changed welfare and accommodation arrangements and is no longer within a reasonable travelling time of the Academy; or
3. The student can demonstrate they are experiencing threat to physical or mental health or safety by remaining at the Academy and can demonstrate clearly how this will be alleviated through a transfer; or
4. There is evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances; or
5. There is evidence that the overseas student's reasonable expectations about their current course are not being met; or
6. It has been agreed by the Academy the student would be better placed in a course that is not available at **Australian Academy of Commerce**; or
7. An appeal (internal or external) on another matter results in a decision or recommendation to release the overseas student; or
8. There is evidence that the overseas student was misled by the registered provider or an education or migration agent regarding the registered provider or its course and the course is therefore unsuitable to their needs and/or study objectives.

A letter of release will normally **not** be granted in the following situations:

- Student fees are in arrears;
- The proposed transfer will jeopardise the student's progression through a package of courses;
- The student has unsatisfactory academic progress;
- The student has unsatisfactory attendance;
- The student's progress is likely to be academically disadvantaged;

- The Academy is concerned that the student's application to transfer is a consequence of the adverse influence of another party;
- The student cannot provide a letter from another registered provider confirming that a valid enrolment offer has been made.

If a letter of release is refused, reasons for the refusal will be documented in writing and the student will be informed of their rights of appeal using the Academy's Complaints and Appeals Procedure.

A copy of the student's letter of release application; notes recording the assessment of the application and a copy of the response letter outlining the decision made in relation to the request for release that was sent to the student by the Academy is placed into the student's file.

Australian Health Information for International Students

The Australian government requires all overseas students to pay for Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) during their stay in Australia. Australian Academy of Commerce preferred OSHC provider is Australian Health Management (AHM). Please read (or have explained) your insurance policy carefully so as to avoid any confusion &/or difficulty. Please click on the link below to find out your entitlements with AHM
<http://www.ahm.com.au/7352/About-OSHC>

Those students who are on a student visa and have paid OSHC will get some money back for health services. Let the Academy know if you need any assistance regarding your OSHC. You must notify your OSHC provider of any changes of address or if husband, wife or children are joining you in Australia for the duration of your stay. You will need to change to family cover. You must show your OSHC membership card every time you use one of the medical services provided.

Your OSHC helps you pay for the doctors, hospitals, emergency ambulance transport and prescribed medicines. You can choose any registered doctor, usually located in a medical centre, which is separate to the hospital. If you need to see a doctor, remember to get a medical certificate.

After-hours medical care: Doctors are usually open during business hours in Australia. If you become ill outside business hours, some Medical centres are open 24 hours per day doctors are on duty at all times in these centres. Only in serious and urgent cases should you go straight to an emergency department in a public hospital.

Specialists: You must see a doctor first to get a referral to a specialist. Check with your OSHC provider to see which specialist services you are covered for. You will pay the doctor at the time of the visit and take your receipt and your membership card to the insurer's office nearby to be refunded part of your receipt.

Public Hospitals (operated by the government): check your insurance policy on how much you are covered.

Private Hospitals (operated on a commercial basis): You may choose to be treated in a private hospital. Check your insurance policy on how much you are covered. Most private hospitals charge more than the public hospitals.

Emergency and Health Services (Very Important Information!)

In Case of Emergency

At any time, should you find yourself in a dangerous or critical situation please call **000** for police, fire brigade or ambulance.

Please note this number, as it may be different from the emergency number in your home country.

Here are other important phone numbers:

- Police Assistance: 131 444
- Domestic Violence Hotline: 1800 656 463
- Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800
- Homelessness Outreach and Support: 1800 505 501
- ADIS (Alcohol and Drug Information Service): is a 24-hour service providing information and counselling; (02) 9361 8000; Toll free outside Sydney 1800 422 5999
- Lifeline: if you are feeling depressed or suicidal call 131 114

In Case of Health Problems

Here are important numbers:

- Abortion Hotline: (02) 9233 3780
- Cancer Council: (02) 9334 1900
- HIV/AIDS: (02) 9332 4000; Toll free outside Sydney 1800 451 600
- Centre care Pregnancy Support: (02) 9283 3099
- Emergency Dental Info (after hours): (02) 9369 1111
- Emergency Prescription Service: (02) 9235 0333
- Poisons Information Hotline: 131 126
- NSW Hepatitis C: (02) 9332 1599; Toll free outside Sydney 1800 803 990
- NUAA (NSW Users and AIDS Association): (02) 9557 1476;
- Rape Crisis Centre: 9819 6565
- Smoking Quit-line Telephone Counselling: State-wide number 131 848
- Sydney Sexual Health Centre: (02) 9382 7440; for further information click on the link below:
<http://www.cyh.com/HealthTopics/HealthTopicDetails.aspx?p=240&np=299&id=2062>

Legal Services

- Should you have a legal difficulty you may be able to get assistance from the Legal Aid Services for NSW. Please click on the link to find out more: <http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/asp/index.asp?pgid=717>
- You may also contact the Law Society of New South Wales to find a lawyer, if you need one. Please click on the link to find out more: <http://www.lawsociety.com.au/page.asp?partID=6602>
- For basic consumer complaints you should contact the NSW Government Office of Fair Trading. Please click on the link to find out more:
http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/Consumers/Rights_and_responsibilities.html
- To find out your rights as a tenant. Please click on the link to find out more: <http://www.tenants.org.au>

Useful Information about Australia

Australia is known as a relatively safe and friendly country; however you should still use common sense during your stay.

- Lock your house or car when you leave
- Stay in communication with your Parents
- Keep your valuables safe
- Stay in a group when out after dark
- Use a hat and sunscreen when outdoors, especially in summer
- Swim between the red and yellow flags on patrolled beaches
- Check with local people and use caution when swimming in unpatrolled water

Size: 4025km east to west
3220km north to south
Area: 7,686,884 square km
Population: over 23 million
Language: English

Approximate Driving Times:

Sydney → Brisbane 11 hours
Sydney → Melbourne 11 hours
Sydney → Cairns 30 hours
Sydney → Adelaide 18 hours
Sydney → Perth 35 hours
Melbourne → Adelaide 9 hours

Public Transport and Taxis

There is an extensive system of public transport in Australian capital cities. Public transport is not free in Australia and fares must be paid before your journey for bus, train, tram and ferry travel. For more information about the transport system in Sydney, visit www.sydneytransport.net.au.

There are various points around the city to purchase a transport ticket, such as train stations, 7-

Eleven stores and newsagents.

Taxis: There are usually taxi stands near main streets, railway stations and international hotels. A taxi is available for hire when the 'TAXI' sign on top of the taxi is lit.

Shopping

The main retail and department stores are open from 9.00am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday. There is late night shopping on Thursday nights to about 9pm depending on the location. On Saturday, stores are open from 9.00am to 5.00pm. On Sunday, the main department stores and some smaller retail outlets are open until about 4.00pm. Check with the stores for other special opening times.

Food

Australia is a multicultural society and most food from around the world is readily available. You will find that there are many speciality stores where specific ingredients can be purchased.

Business Hours

Most business hours in Australia are 9.00am till 5.00pm from Monday to Friday only.

Telephone: For information about the Australian phone system check the phone book. The front of the phone book is a useful reference including emergency services, public transport and government departments.

Local calls in Australia: Local calls from a public, business or private phone to another private or business phone are un-timed. Calls made from a standard fixed phone service to a mobile are charged at varying rates.

Long distance calls in Australia: You pay per minute according to distance of call. You may need to dial an area code then the local number.

Overseas calls: You pay per minute and the amount varies according to the country you are calling. To make an overseas call, follow these steps: **dial 0011**. Followed by

- dial the country code you want to call
- dial the area code of the city/town
- dial the number

Driving: An international driver's licence is valid in Australia. Students can convert their current Driver's Licence by taking a test. It is important to understand the Australian road rules and traffic signs before you begin to drive. For more information about driving in Australia visit www.rta.nsw.gov.au.

Key Road Guidelines:

- Vehicles are driven on the left-hand side of the road.
- Seat belts must be worn at all times by all people in the vehicle.
- Speed limits are enforced.
- Driving with blood alcohol content of 0.05% or above is against the law.
- Provisional drivers ("P" plates must displayed at all times on the front of the car & the rear when driving) hold a probationary licence. They must not drive unless they have 0.0% blood alcohol level.

If you have a driver's licence and plan to use a car, motorbike or scooter, you may wish to join the roadside assistance group NRMA in New South Wales. They provide free 24-hour emergency service for members, car insurance and for a fee they will inspect and report on a second-hand vehicle before you purchase.

Working while studying:

Students are not allowed to work until their course is in session. Students who received their student visa on, or after, 26 April 2008 also have permission to work in Australia. If the student received their student visa on or after 26 April 2008 they entitled to work up to 40 hours per fortnight while their course is in session. Students' attendance records will be monitored in the classrooms only.

There are no work rights for students studying on tourist visas.

Banking and Currency

Banking Hours: Most banks are open during the week from 9:00am to 4:00pm. ATMs are available

24 hours per day at most branches. We recommend opening a bank account in Australia. To do this people must have a Tax File Number (TFN). You can apply for a TFN by visiting the Australian Tax Office. When you open a bank account, make sure you also have the following with you:

- Passport
- Money for deposit
- The Australian Academy of Commerce student card.
- A letter from the Academy confirming your study dates (this is not always required)

You can arrange with your home bank to transfer money to your Australian account by telegraphic transfer.

Credit Cards and ATM: If you have a credit card or ATM card, never keep your personal identification number (PIN) with your card.

Money Exchange: To exchange money you must have your passport. You can change money at banks, major hotels, airports, and the offices of American Express or Thomas Cook.

Useful websites

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry www.acci.asn.au
Australian Council for Private Education & Training www.acpet.edu.au
Legislation & Case Law www.austlii.edu.au & www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au
Occupational Health and Safety www.nohsc.gov.au & www.workcover.nsw.gov.au
Workplace Harassment, Victimization and Bullying www.airc.gov.au & www.jobwatch.org.au & www.bulliesdownunder.com
Overseas Students Ombudsman www.oso.gov.au

Glossary of Terms

ACPET	Australian Council for Private Education & Training
NVR	National Vocational Education and Training Regulator
DET	Department of Education and Training
DHA	Department of Home Affairs
ELICOS	English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
NEAS	National ELT Accreditation Scheme
OSHC	Overseas Student Health Cover
VET	Vocational Education and Training
ASQA	Australian Skills Quality Authority