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Government of Western Australia
Department of Training
and Workforce Development

CARE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS POLICY

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All policy and procedural statements contained within this document are lawful orders for the purposes of section 80(a) of the Public Sector Management Act 1994 (WA) and are therefore to be observed by all Department of Training and Workforce Development employees.

1. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy outlines the provision of accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements for accepted international students, including those who are under the age of 18, in compliance with requirements specified in:

- Standard 5 and 6 of the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code 2018)*:
 - Standard 5: *Younger Overseas Students* - The registered provider of overseas students aged under the age of 18 must meet legislative or other regulatory requirements relating to child welfare and protection.
 - Standard 6: *Overseas Student Support Services* - The registered provider must assist all overseas students to adjust to study and life in Australia and have appropriate orientation programs that help overseas students to access the information and services they require.
- *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015*, specifically Clause 1.7 Support Learners and Clause 8.5 Comply with all relevant legal requirements:
 - The registered training organisation (RTO) determines the support needs of individual learners and provides access to the educational and support services necessary for the individual learner to meet the requirements of the training product, as specified in training packages or VET accredited courses; and
 - The RTO ensures that Police clearances and Working with Children (WWC) check clearances have been issued for all staff interacting with students under the age of 18.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all onshore international students by TAFE International Western Australia (TIWA). The purpose of this policy is to outline the steps that must be taken to ensure that support services for students, and the accommodation and welfare arrangements in place for students under the age of 18 are appropriate. Students participating in International Secondary Student Exchange Programs (ISSEP) are outside the scope of this policy.

3. PRINCIPLES

N/A

4. BACKGROUND

TIWA acknowledges that as a registered provider enrolling international students, it must facilitate access to learning and support services consistent with the requirements of each course, and the individual needs of each student. As a registered provider enrolling students under the age of 18, TIWA is also committed to ensuring it meets the Commonwealth, state or territory legislation or other regulatory requirements relating to child welfare and protection appropriate to the jurisdiction(s) in which it operates.

5. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

5.1 Airport pickup service

Meets students on arrival in Perth and drives them to their accommodation

5.2 CAAW

Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare

5.3 ELICOS

English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students

5.4 Home Affairs

Department of Home Affairs

5.5 National Code 2018

National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018

5.6 Homestay

Where students live with an approved homestay provider for the duration of their visa

5.7 PRISMS

Provider Registration and International Student Management System

5.8 RTO

Registered training organisation

5.9 WWC

Working With Children

6. PROCEDURES

6.1 Legislative requirements for welfare approval for students under the age of 18

6.1.1 Students aged 12 and under must be accompanied by a parent for the duration of their studies. Home Affairs will issue welfare approval for these students.

6.1.2 Students aged 13 and over, must choose one of the following options:

- Option 1: Nominate a blood relative over the age of 21 to be their guardian for the duration of their student visa. Home Affairs will issue welfare approval for these students.
- Option 2: Request that TIWA arrange an approved homestay placement through TIWA's nominated homestay contractor. TIWA will issue the CAAW letter for the student.

6.2 Welfare arrangements approved by TIWA for students under the age of 18

6.2.1 Where TIWA accepts responsibility for approving accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements for a student who is under the age of 18, TIWA is responsible for:

- nominating the period of welfare arrangements and notifying Home Affairs through the Provider Registration and International Student Management

System (PRISMS)

- ensuring that any adults involved in providing accommodation and welfare arrangements to the student have valid WWC clearances in line with the *Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004*
- implementing documented processes for verifying that the student's accommodation is appropriate to the student's age and needs
 - prior to the accommodation being approved; and
 - at least every six months thereafter
- advising Home Affairs via PRISMS within 24 hours in the event that:
 - the student has changed his or her living arrangements
 - the student will be cared for by a parent or nominated relative approved by Home Affairs and a CAAW is no longer required, or
 - TIWA, as the registered provider, is no longer able to approve the student's welfare arrangements
- ensuring students under the age of 18 are given age and culturally appropriate information on:
 - who to contact in an emergency situation, including contact numbers of a nominated staff member and/or service provider; and
 - seeking assistance and reporting any incident or allegation involving actual or alleged sexual, physical or other abuse.

6.2.2 Where TIWA has issued a CAAW, the student must comply with under 18 welfare guidelines issued by the homestay provider for the duration of their visa.

6.2.3 If the student does not comply with the guidelines, the Associate Director Customer Services, Quality & Compliance, and the TIWA Welfare Officer will work with the student, the school/college and the relevant support services such as the school psychologist or the Chaplain to address the issues.

6.2.4 In the event that TIWA is unable to contact a student and has concerns for the student's welfare, TIWA will make all reasonable efforts to locate the student, including notifying the police and any other relevant Commonwealth, state or territory agencies as soon as practicable in line with the International Student Critical Incident Management Policy.

6.2.5 If a student is deemed to be an ongoing risk, the student's enrolment may be terminated and they will be required to return to their home country.

6.2.6 TIWA will continue to be responsible for the welfare arrangements for a student until any of the following applies:

- the student has alternative welfare arrangements approved by another registered provider;
- care of the student by a parent or nominated relative is approved by Home Affairs;
- the student leaves Australia; or
- TIWA has notified Home Affairs that it is no longer prepared to approve the student's welfare arrangements.

6.2.7 Where TIWA enrolls a student under the age of 18 who has welfare arrangements approved by another registered provider, TIWA will:

- negotiate the transfer date for welfare arrangements with the releasing

- registered provider to ensure there is no gap; and
- inform the student of their visa obligation to maintain their current welfare arrangements until the transfer date, have alternative welfare arrangements approved or return to their home country until the new approved welfare arrangements take effect.

6.3 Accommodation and airport pickup services

6.3.1. TIWA has appointed a contractor, via tender, to manage and provide home stay placements for metropolitan and regional students and airport pickup services for metropolitan students who elect the homestay option.

6.3.2. The contractor is required to provide international students with a range of homestay accommodation options appropriate to the age of the student including, where required, temporary accommodation and short term home stays (approximately four weeks). If required, the contractor also has access to a range of emergency accommodation options.

6.3.3. Accommodation and airport pickup services are provided on a year round basis that is, 52 weeks including overnight, weekends and on public holidays.

6.3.4. The contractor is responsible for ensuring:

- homestay arrangements and airport pickups are facilitated as required;
- homestay providers have an adequate and current home insurance policy that includes public liability cover;
- evidence of the screening process used by the contractor is made available to TIWA on request;
- prior to approving accommodation, documented processes are implemented for verifying that:
 - any adults providing accommodation or residing in the home:
 - have the appropriate and current police clearances and WWC clearances where the student is under the age of 18;
 - speak fluent English; and
 - hold permanent residency visas
 - the student's accommodation is appropriate to the student's age;
 - the homestay location is not more than 45 minutes travel time by public transport (bus or rail) to the TAFE college or school;
- home inspections of the homestay providers are conducted (at minimum once a year) to ensure the requirements of the accommodation and access to public transport are met;
- records of home inspections are provided to TIWA upon request;
- a register of all its subcontractors (including homestay providers and airport pickup services providers, if applicable) is maintained and forwarded to TIWA on a yearly basis or upon request. The register must contain names and addresses of all its subcontractors with current police clearances, WWC clearances and dates of audit inspections and insurances;
- proper receipting for homestay placements and airport pickup fees payable by an international student, with copies made available to TIWA upon request;
- dispute resolution procedures are conducted in a timely and effective manner to achieve suitable outcomes for both parties; and
- feedback on any disputes, the process undertaken and the outcomes for both the student and the home stay provider is provided to TIWA

immediately.

6.3.5. As the contracting authority, TIWA is responsible for:

- managing the home stay and airport pickup contract;
- conducting quarterly meetings with the provider's Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to discuss contract and compliance matters;
- implementing documented processes for selecting, screening and monitoring any third parties engaged by the registered provider to organise and assess welfare and accommodation arrangements;
- conducting sample audits to verify WWC clearances are current for staff and host families;
- maintaining up-to-date records of the student's contact details including the contact details of the student's parent(s), legal guardian or any adult responsible for the welfare of students under the age of 18;
- liaising with the homestay and airport pickup contractor in relation to welfare and accommodation issues as they arise;
- monitoring work arrangements entered into by international students who are under the age of 18 including ensuring parental approval;
- monitoring and recording students' holiday arrangements;
- implementing a documented policy and process for managing emergency situations affecting students, including when welfare arrangements are disrupted for students under the age of 18;
- conducting home inspections (at a minimum of one a year) to ensure requirements of students under the age of 18 are being met;
- managing and recording all welfare incidents; and
- managing and recording changes of homestay within the welfare period.

6.4 Support services

6.4.1 Student welfare officer

TIWA has allocated a welfare officer to support all international students, with a particular focus on students under the age of 18. TIWA's welfare officer:

- ensures arrangements for students are appropriate;
- meets with students under the age of 18 each semester;
- monitors variations to welfare arrangements for students under the age of 18, such as holiday plans;
- seeks parental approval for students under the age of 18 to undertake part time employment;
- maintains compliance records in the International Admissions data base;
- generates monthly reports on outstanding compliance issues; and
- liaises with the contractor, schools and colleges to monitor student welfare concerns and manages issues on a case by case basis as they arise.

6.4.2 Orientation

TIWA works with schools and colleges to ensure international students participate in an age and culturally appropriate orientation program that provides information about:

- services, facilities and resources available at their school or college to assist them to adjust to study and life in Australia;
- support services to assist with general or personal circumstances that may adversely affect their education in Australia;
- names and contact details of TIWA and school or TAFE college staff who

- serve as the official contact points for international students;
- English language and study assistance programs support available at their school or college; and
- personal security and safety.

6.4.3 Ongoing support

TIWA works with schools and colleges to ensure that:

- Police clearances and WWC clearances have been issued for all staff interacting with students under the age of 18;
- overseas students are offered and receive reasonable support to enable them to achieve expected learning outcomes, regardless of the overseas student's place or mode of study, at no additional cost to the student; and
- support services are consistent with the requirements of the course, mode of study and learning needs of overseas student cohorts, including documented processes for supporting and maintaining contact with overseas students undertaking online or distance units of study.

6.5 Complaints and appeals

Students and homestay providers can make a complaint or appeal a decision made by TIWA or the contractor.

- The complaint or appeal must be submitted in writing to the Associate Director Customer Services, Quality & Compliance TIWA.
- Written acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint or appeal will be provided within two business days.
- When a complaint or appeal is received, the Associate Director Customer Services, Quality & Compliance TIWA will review the information provided and may also consider additional information relevant to the issue.
- The review will consider the following matters:
 - the issue has been dealt with in good faith;
 - the decision(s) made were based on supporting evidence;
 - an opportunity to submit additional information and/or evidence was provided before the decision was made;
 - adequate weight was given to matters of importance, with matters of less importance weighted accordingly;
 - the overall merits of the issue were given proper consideration; and
 - the decision was reasonable and the outcome was based on reasonable grounds and fair process.
- The recommended outcome of the review will be documented by the Associate Director Customer Services, Quality & Compliance TIWA and approved by the General Manager TIWA.
- Once approved, the outcome of the complaint or appeal will be provided, in writing.
- The review will be completed within 28 days of receipt of the complaint or appeal.

7. GUIDELINES

N/A

8. RELATED POLICIES AND OTHER RELATED DOCUMENTS

- *International Student Admissions and Enrolment Policy*
- *International Student Transfer and Release Policy*
- *International Student Critical Incident Management Policy*
- *Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW)*
- *Homestay provider tender and contract documents*

9. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011*
- *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015*
- *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*
- *Vocational Education and Training (General) Regulations 2009*
- *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000*
- *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018*

10. REVIEW DATE

17 August 2025

Development Date		May 2014 Version 1	
Revision History			
Date	Name	Reason	Outcome & Changes
2014	Director, Academic Strategy	Continuous improvement	This policy combines previous RTO Policies 16, 17 and 18.
2015	Director, Academic Strategy	Continuous improvement	Updated in line with tender documentation.
2015	Director, Academic Strategy	Continuous improvement	Updated to reflect introduction of <i>Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015</i> .
2016	Director, Academic Strategy	Sectoral Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated to reflect change from ETI to TIWA and STPs to TAFE colleges. Name changed to <i>Care of International Students under the age of 18</i>. Amendment of section on TIWA's responsibilities.
2017	Manager, Education Programs	Continuous improvement	Updated to include care for and services to students (Standard 6 National Code 2018).
2019	Manager, Education	Annual review	Re-structured for clarity and updated to include a complaints and appeals policy for students and homestay providers.
2022	Manager, Customer Services	Continuous Improvement	Policy review.
2023	Associate Director Customer Services, Quality & Compliance	Continuous Improvement	Policy reviewed and scope expanded to cover all international students.

11. CONTACT INFORMATION

TAFE International Western Australia
Service Delivery Directorate

APPENDIX

N/A