



# STUDENT SUPPORT, WELLBEING AND SAFETY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students at Lincoln Education Australia (LEA) are provided with a safe and supportive environment with access to support from academic and non-academic staff and services to assist in the adjustment to study and life in Australia.

## POLICY

### Scope

This policy applies to current students and recent graduates.

### Principles

#### *General*

LEA is committed to providing a supportive learning environment for all domestic students and those international students transitioning to a new culture and life in Australia.

#### *Student Support*

LEA has a student experience team offering on-campus advice, information and a referral service designed to meet the needs of the student body with counselling, financial matters, legal issues, work rights, health, welfare and accommodation.

LEA's academic staff also offer student's support in their academic studies, outside of timetabled class sessions.

The NSW Government also provides various support services to international students. For more information on these services, visit <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/guide/support-international-students>

#### *Transition*

The first year of study for students can present challenges, particularly for international students, as they may face major changes in language, culture and the learning environment.

LEA aims to facilitate a positive and successful transition to study for commencing students including providing encouragement and academic and non-academic resources and services for students to remain enrolled and to complete their course within the expected duration of their Confirmation of Enrolment.



LEA's transition programs commence at pre-enrolment stage, to orientation moving into the students' first year of study.

### ***Orientation***

All commencing students are required to attend orientation, which is held one week prior to the commencement of term.

Orientation is managed by the Student Experience Department and is a structured program to support commencing students' transition to studying at LEA. The program includes:

- An introduction to LEA's academic and administrative services including support services;
- Campus facilities and resources, including learning resources; and
- An opportunity to be introduced to key academic and administrative staff and meet fellow students.

### ***Academic English Language Support***

LEA shall provide academic and English language support to assist students in their academic progress.

Students identified as not progressing satisfactorily in their studies may be recommended to seek academic or English language support as they are potentially at risk of having their enrolment cancelled.

### ***Advocacy Support***

LEA recognises the need to provide students with access to advocacy support in regard to their academic progress, experience on and off campus, and LEA's complaints and appeals process.

### ***Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander***

LEA makes the following commitments in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' education:

- Providing LEA admission pathways to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as stipulated in the *Admissions Policy and Procedures*;
- Ensuring the LEA's campuses and study locations are welcoming, respectful, supportive, non-discriminatory and free of harassment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with study spaces where they feel culturally safe; and
- Promoting understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditional and contemporary perspectives, knowledge, spirituality, skills, values and culture across the LEA.



### ***Career Assistance***

LEA offers a career-assistance support service available to current students and recent graduates. The service aims to equip them with practical skills and knowledge towards gaining employment, such as:

- Resume preparation;
- Interview skills and preparation;
- Career coaching and planning;
- Job seeking workshops.

### ***Students With Special Needs***

LEA is committed to ensuring that students identified with special needs (disability, mental health, learning difficulty, injury or ongoing medical condition etc.) have access to an inclusive education in a safe and supportive environment free from harassment and victimisation.

LEA shall endeavour to make all reasonable adjustments to a student's education program, which may involve, but is not limited to, teaching and learning strategies, or adjusting learning resources or the campus environment to address the needs of individual students.

Students with special needs shall be offered the same assessment standards as those applied to all other students. No concessions are made regarding the assessment criteria in order to uphold the academic standards and integrity of LEA and its courses.

Students aware of their special needs shall disclose their requirements during the admission process by completing a Long-Term Special Needs Request Form so an assessment and adjustment can be made to accommodate, where possible, the students' learning.

LEA may refuse to admit a student with special needs if LEA is not able to make available reasonable adjustments on campus for the student's special need or enrolling the student would pose a safety risk to the student, other students or staff at LEA.

### ***Wellbeing and Safety***

A safe environment is promoted and fostered by advising students and staff on actions they can take to enhance their safety and security on and off campus and online.

LEA is committed to ensuring all students are advised of the actions they can take, the staff they may contact, and the support services available if their personal circumstances are having an adverse effect on their studies. Furthermore, in such circumstances and in accordance with LEA's *Assessments Policy and Procedures*, students can apply for the opportunity to complete assessment tasks at a later date.



LEA's *Critical Incident Management Plan* outlines the immediate actions to be taken in the event of a critical incident and any follow up as required.

### ***Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault***

LEA is committed to educating staff and students on respectful relationships, sex and consent, as well as making clear to all staff and students LEA's no-tolerance stance on harassment and assault. Through these measures, LEA shall build a culture that actively discourages sexual harassment and assault.

LEA takes a 'zero tolerance' approach to sexual harassment and assault by students and / or staff.

### ***Privacy and Personal Information***

LEA shall ensure that the rights of all students to privacy and confidentiality are respected by all staff, including those with special needs or those who seek counselling or advocacy support.

## **PROCEDURES**

These procedures outline LEA processes for the provision of student support, wellbeing and safety information available to all students.

### **Orientation**

Orientation is coordinated by the Student Experience Manager. The Student Experience Manager shall email all new students a reminder of the time and day of orientation at least one week prior. Any student who does not attend shall be contacted directly by LEA and through their agent. Students who have not been able to attend shall be given an opportunity for orientation at the earliest possible time through the Student Experience Manager.

#### ***Orientation Program***

The orientation program includes:

- Registration.
- A welcome from a senior manager or academic leader of LEA.
- Verification of the student's Confirmation of Enrolment.
- Presentations explaining the student's course structure and content, study and living in Australia, and introduction to:
  - o academic staff, Student Experience Manager and Student Wellbeing Team
  - o Overseas Student Health Cover
  - o the facilities and resources available on campus and online, including the library and computer labs
  - o LEA's Learning Management System (LMS) and the student email system



- o policies and practices to prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment
- o emergency services
- o complaints and appeals processes
- o student visa conditions relating to course progress
- o wellbeing and safety on campus and in Australia
- o international students' work rights in Australia.
- Academic Integrity Module
- Timetabling.
- Verification of the student's financial status.
- Credit exemption (advanced standing) check.
- Processing of the student's ID card.

## **Access to Academic Support**

LEA provides students with academic support from academic staff, consisting of one-to-one academic skills assistance including:

- academic communications skills
- academic integrity and referencing
- research skills
- content revision and time management
- exam preparation.

Academic staff are available to meet with students:

- face-to-face via the consultation hours posted in the LMS for each unit, on a 'drop-in' basis, or by appointment; and
- online via the online forums on the LMS or email.

## **Advocacy Support**

Students can access advocacy support via LEA's Student Experience Manager, Academic staff or Student Experience Officers. External advocacy and support information is also available from the Student Experience team.

## **Student Support Services**

LEA provides information regarding the services available to its students including student support, student representation, wellbeing and safety by the:

- LEA website
- Student Handbook
- Orientation
- LEA policies and procedures
- Learning Management System
- Information bulletins and posters on campus
- Communications to the student's LEA email address.



### ***Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment***

LEA provides a range of services including counselling and referrals to external services for students making a complaint regarding sexual assault or sexual harassment incidents.

Upon making a complaint under the *Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures*, the LEA Counsellor shall be responsible for ensuring the provision of available support services to the student. See also LEA's *Student Counselling Policy*.

### ***Special Needs***

If a student self-identifies with a special need during the admission process, the Admissions Officer shall:

- Request the student completes the Long-Term Special Needs Request Form
- Request relevant medical documents
- Seek referral through the Student Wellbeing Team if further external assessment or documentation is required
- Interview the student and/or education agent if required.

After assessment of the student's needs, the Admissions Officer shall refer the student to the Student Experience Manager and the Academic Dean to discuss and identify what 'reasonable adjustments' LEA can arrange to assist the student with their studies. Special needs support that can be arranged may include:

- Large-print class materials
- Specialised equipment or furniture
- Access to lecture rooms, library or other facilities
- Counselling support
- Extra time for completion of assessment tasks including examinations
- Seating at the front of a lecture room
- Oral or sign interpreters etc. (at the expense of the student).

LEA shall make reasonable adjustments to assessment methods to allow students with special needs to be assessed against the unit learning outcomes. However, alternative assessment methods shall be arranged with approval from the student's lecturer, subject coordinator and the relevant Course Coordinator. A request for an alternative assessment task shall be submitted for each assessment task in each unit for which the student is enrolled.

Students who develop a special need after enrolment should contact the Student Experience team to identify options to reduce the impact of their disability on their studies. The Student Experience team shall then meet with the Dean or delegate and the Chief Operating Officer to discuss the possible range of support or reasonable adjustment that LEA can provide to assist the student.

For further details, see LEA's *Reasonable Adjustment Policy*.



## ***Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Students***

LEA recognises the systemic under representation of ATSI students in higher education and is committed to provide equal opportunity of access, participation and advancement. LEA also acknowledges Australian ATSI cultures and traditions.

### *Indigenous Participation*

LEA is committed to ensuring that enrolled ATSI students studying at LEA have the necessary assistance they require to complete their studies by improving academic and personal support.

### *Academic Support*

LEA provides ATSI students with a welcoming environment that embraces all cultures and every space is made safe for all students regardless of their backgrounds. Additionally, there is also free access to computers and printing facilities, common rooms, and kitchen facilities to assist ATSI students in getting the most out of their study at LEA.

Academic staff are also available for face-to-face and online consultations during consultation hours. LEA also organises free academic workshops for ATSI students to refine and improve their research skills, academic writing skills, exam preparation and time management skills.

LEA and its academic staffs may also, in their discretion, make reasonable adjustments to assessment methods to ATSI students with learning difficulties. However, students shall obtain approval from the student's lecturer, unit coordinator and the relevant Head of Discipline.

LEA may take into consideration any special circumstances, including cultural and domestic backgrounds, in making such an adjustment. Students may provide evidence to support their application.

### *Non-Academic Support*

LEA also offers free counselling services for issues relating to academic performance and where relevant, referrals to external counselling services when a psychological or psychiatric issue is identified. Additionally, ATSI students has access to advocacy support to promote awareness and representation of their community.

LEA acknowledges the cost of pursuing higher education and recognises the burden it might impose on ATSI students and their respective families. Thus, LEA provides opportunity for ATSI students to negotiate a payment plan to ease the potential financial burden.

These payment plans are to be considered individually by the Chief Executive Officer or delegate as it is stated in the Fees, Charges and Refunds Policy.



## **Continual Improvement**

LEA is committed to improve its services to ATSI students and it shall monitor ATSI student participation and completion data to identify and address gaps.

## **Record Keeping**

Admissions and student experience staff shall upload medical and other relevant documentation to the student's file in the Student Management System, as appropriate.

## **Privacy and Personal Information**

LEA collects student's personal information in accordance with its *Privacy Policy* and the *Data and Records Integrity Policy & Procedures*.

All personal information is held in the LEA Student Management System and is appropriately secured against misuse, interference, loss and unauthorised access, modification or disclosure. Once the information is no longer required it shall be appropriately destroyed.

## **Policy Implementation and Monitoring**

The Academic Board delegates responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this policy to the Student Experience Manager.

The Academic Board shall review all periodic reports from relevant committees and staff members.

Additionally, the Academic Board shall review all relevant student complaints, concerns raised by staff members, and instances of student or staff misconduct on an ongoing basis.

Based on these monitoring activities, the Academic Board shall provide a report to the Corporate Governance Board and ensure that findings are taken into account in planning, quality assurance and improvement processes

## **Compliance**

All staff and students at LEA are required to comply with this policy and its procedures, and with related policies and procedures. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action.

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|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>File Number</b>            | LEA-GEN-COR-70059-D   |
| <b>Responsible Officer</b>    | Chief Executive Officer   |
| <b>Contact Officer</b>        | Student Experience Manager  |
| <b>Legislative Compliance</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015</i></li><li>• <i>Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)</i></li><li>• <i>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011</i></li></ul> |





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|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Supporting Documents</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy</i></li> <li>• <i>English Language Entry Requirements Policy</i></li> <li>• <i>Student Learning Support Policy and Procedures</i></li> <li>• <i>Anti-Discrimination Policy and Procedures</i></li> <li>• <i>Course Development and Approval Policy and Procedures</i></li> <li>• <i>Information for Students Policy and Procedures</i></li> <li>• <i>International Student Services Procedures</i></li> <li>• <i>IT Resources and Online Conduct Policy</i></li> <li>• <i>Orientation Program Policy and Procedures</i></li> <li>• <i>Student Counselling Policy</i></li> <li>• <i>Sexual Harassment and Assault Policy and Procedures</i></li> <li>• <i>Student Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy</i></li> <li>• <i>Assessment Policy</i></li> </ul> |
| <b>Related Documents</b>    |  |
| <b>Superseded Documents</b> |  |
| <b>Effective Date</b>       | 1 January 2022   |
| <b>Next Review</b>          | 3 years from the effective date  |

## Definitions

**Academic Board:** Governing body responsible for academic matters, including learning and teaching, course approval, workforce planning, academic staff appointments, research and professional development, academic policies and procedures, overseeing student grievances and appeals processes.

**Corporate Governance Board:** Governing body responsible for oversight of all higher education operations, including the ongoing viability of LEA and the quality of its higher education delivery. The Corporate Governance Board guides the Executive Management team and delegates responsibility for academic matters to the Academic Board.

**Course Coordinator:** Senior academic staff member responsible for the delivery, planning and development of a course at LEA, particularly subject curriculum information, and works in conjunction with other senior academic staff.

**Learning support services:** Support services LEA offers students to help them effectively read, understand, write and engage with academic language and learning. This includes workshops, seminars and one-on-one consultation sessions.

**Orientation:** On-campus scheduled program of activities prior to the beginning of each semester that provides students with opportunities to meet staff and other students, tour the campus, enrol in academic workshops and seminars, engage in social activities, learn more about LEA and the services on offer, learn more about their rights and responsibilities as students, and access other important information.

**Student Experience Officer:** A non-academic member of LEA staff responsible for providing students with information regarding support services. A Student Experience Officer can



refer students to academic staff, counsellors, general practitioners, and other health services.

## Review Schedule

This policy shall be reviewed by the Academic Board every three years.

| Version History |                |                |                 |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Version number: | Approved by:   | Approval Date: | Revision Notes: |
| 1.0             | Academic Board | 13/08/2020     | New policy      |
|                 |                |                |                 |
|                 |                |                |                 |