



Australian College of Theology Limited
CRICOS 02650E

OVERSEAS STUDENT HANDBOOK

Fourth Edition





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OVERSEAS STUDENT HANDBOOK

Fourth Edition (published 2017)

This Handbook provides regulations and guidelines for overseas students of the Australian College of Theology. It forms a supplement to the annually published ACT Undergraduate and Postgraduate Handbooks.

Interpretation of this Handbook is to take place within affiliated colleges (where relevant), but final rulings on it come from the Dean and the Academic Board of the Australian College of Theology.

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook for overseas students should be read in conjunction with the policies of the Australian College of Theology, published at: <http://www.actheology.edu.au/policies.php>, and the annual handbooks of the Australian College of Theology, published at: <http://www.actheology.edu.au/handbooks.php>.

The term **“overseas student”** applies to students and applicants who wish to study a course of the Australian College of Theology while in Australia on a student visa after being granted a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) from the Australian College of Theology or one of its affiliated colleges on behalf of the Australian College of Theology. This handbook describes some of the policies and procedures which apply to overseas students.

This term is distinct from an **“international student”**, which is used for determining the fees paid for units of study. An “international student” is defined as a student who is:

- Not an Australian citizen or New Zealand Citizen;
- Not a student with a permanent Australian visa;
- In Australia with any kind of temporary entry permit;
- A diplomat or a dependant of a diplomat (except New Zealand);
- Resident overseas for the duration of the unit but not an Australian or New Zealand Citizen or permanent resident of Australia (offshore students).

ABOUT US

The Australian College of Theology (ACT, the College) is a national provider of accredited higher education courses in theology. The College was established under the auspices of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia in 1891. It is now an ecumenical consortium of over 3,000 students enrolled in 16 affiliated colleges approved to teach the awards of the College on its behalf. These awards range from one and half-year diplomas, three-year undergraduate and coursework masters degrees to masters and doctoral research degrees.

The College was granted self-accrediting authority in mid-2010. The higher education courses of the College have been accredited by the Board of Directors for the period 2017-2021.

The College has a centrally devised and managed curriculum and a quality assurance process that is applied across the whole consortium of affiliated colleges. The day-to-day educational system is managed by the Dean from the College office in Sydney. The Academic Board and its Committees share this responsibility. The Board oversees policy, regulation, review of units, and course structure for research, coursework and diploma awards.

The Academic Board and its Committees are comprised mostly of principals or senior faculty members of affiliated colleges. A number of senior university academics also sit on the Board and its Committees to help ensure that the practice of the College (especially in the outcome of the consideration of research examiner’s reports and general academic policy) remains in line with best practice in the university sector.

The College is governed by a Board of Directors. Its members are drawn from the General Synod of the Anglican Church in Australia, college principals and other persons consistent with the requirements of the Australian Government.

The Australian College of Theology welcomes students from overseas to study at its affiliated colleges which are authorised to accept overseas student enrolments.

The ACT is the registered Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) provider and the legal entity for all courses offered by affiliated colleges. In 2014, the ACT was granted national CRICOS registration, replacing the former state-based registrations. The ACT’s CRICOS provider code is 02650E.

AFFILIATED COLLEGES

In NSW the following affiliated colleges are endorsed to enrol overseas students:

- Morling College
- Christ College
- Sydney Missionary and Bible College
- Youthworks

In Queensland the following affiliated colleges are endorsed to enrol overseas students:

- Brisbane School of Theology
- Malyon College
- Queensland Theological College

In South Australia the following affiliated college is endorsed to enrol overseas students:

- Bible College of South Australia

In Tasmania the following affiliated college is endorsed to enrol overseas students:

- Melbourne School of Theology – Worldview Centre for Intercultural Studies

In Victoria the following affiliated colleges are endorsed to enrol overseas students:

- Melbourne School of Theology
- Presbyterian Theological College
- Reformed Theological College
- Ridley College

In Western Australia the following affiliated colleges are endorsed to enrol overseas students:

- Trinity Theological College
- Vose Seminary

CRICOS COURSES

Not all of the courses of the Australian College of Theology are available to overseas. Only the courses listed on ACT's website are offered to overseas students:

www.actheology.edu.au/overseas-students/



APPLICATION AND ENROLMENT PROCEDURE

1. Contact the registrar or the admission office of your chosen ACT's affiliated college.
2. The ACT through its affiliated college provides the following information to the student:
 - a. the requirements for acceptance into a course, including the minimum level of English language proficiency, educational qualifications or work experience required and whether course credit may be applicable
 - b. the course content and duration, qualification offered if applicable, modes of study and assessment methods
 - c. campus locations and a general description of facilities, equipment, and learning and library resources available to students
 - d. indicative course-related fees including advice on the potential for fees to change during the student's course and applicable refund policies
 - e. information about the grounds on which the student's enrolment may be deferred, suspended or cancelled
 - f. a description of the ESOS framework made available electronically by DEST, and
 - g. relevant information on living in Australia, including:
 - h. indicative costs of living

- i. accommodation options
 - ii. where relevant, schooling obligations and options for school-aged dependants of intending students, including that school fees may be incurred; and
 - iii. Other pertinent information
3. Overseas student submits an application with the entry requirement documents. Please refer to your chosen ACT's affiliated college for further information on application procedure, fees, deadlines of submission and required application documents.
 4. The ACT through its affiliated college ensures student's qualifications, experience, and English language proficiency are appropriate for the course for which enrolment is sought.
 5. If the student meets the entry requirements, the ACT through its affiliated college offers a place to study by providing a Letter of Offer. We will also provide a Written Agreement to the student. (Note that a Letter of Offer and a Written Agreement can be one and the same document depending on how it is presented by the college).

If the student doesn't meet the requirements, let's say doesn't have the required IELTS exam score, the student may be provided with a conditional Letter or Offer. This means that the student has been granted a place to study at the college if the student meets the conditions stated in the Letter of Offer.

The student must fulfill the conditions and provide evidence to the college before the student can accept the offer. If the student is unable to provide information, the college cannot process the enrolment.

6. If applicable, apply for credit for prior learning. If there's a credit granted, this should be indicated in the Letter of Offer as well as the revised course duration and the amount of credit received.
7. The Letter of Offer or Written Agreement must be signed or otherwise accepted by the student prior to college accepting any course money.
8. Once the Letter of Offer or Written Agreement is accepted, you are required to pay the tuition fees or deposit as agreed with the affiliated college.
9. Once the signed Letter of Offer/Written Agreement and required fees are received, a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) will be issued. You will need the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) to apply for a student visa. The course duration in the CoE may be reduced as a result of the credit granted.

(Office procedure: The affiliated college creates a CoE on PRISMS and notifies the ACT. Forward a copy of the signed Written Agreement to ACT as a reference to the details recorded in the CoE. ACT checks and approves the CoE.)

10. As a condition of student visa, the student will need to arrange overseas health cover (OSHC) for the duration of the study.



ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

At ACT students need to meet ACT program requirements:

- Be over 18 at the commencement of their study
- Meet the program:
 - English language requirements
 - Academic admission requirements
 - Requirements of your enrolling college (if applicable)

ACADEMIC ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The details of the academic entry requirements for each course are listed in the undergraduate and postgraduate handbooks of the college. The handbooks are available online:

Undergraduate Handbook: http://www.actheology.edu.au/handbooks_undergraduate.php

Postgraduate Handbook: http://www.actheology.edu.au/handbooks_postgraduate.php

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

All candidates must be able to communicate adequately in English. The ACT has established certain requirements for English language testing for potential candidates from non-English backgrounds. Applicants are advised to consult the ACT's Admission Policy – English Language Proficiency, which can be found at <http://www.actheology.edu.au/policies.php>.

OVERSEAS QUALIFICATION GUIDE

The following information will help you calculate the entry level equivalences for overseas qualifications.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB) DIPLOMA

This is the score as reported in the IB Diploma. Incomplete diplomas will not be considered for admission. Students must obtain the minimum of 24 points to be eligible for the award of Diploma and to also achieve the minimum points for course entry eligibility.

CHINA UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE EXAM (GAO KAO)

University entrance exam. Score is calculated using the total score of the 4 subjects (the maximum score is 750).

GCE A LEVEL

Scores are calculated from the results in three Advanced Level (A2) subjects, where A=5, B=4, C=3, D=2, E=1. Up to two Advanced Subsidiary (AS) level results may be included in the aggregate and will be calculated based on A=2.5, B=2, C=1.5, D=1, E=0.5.

Comparable qualifications include the Cambridge Higher School Certificate (Principal Level), West African General Certificate of Education (Advanced Level), East African Advanced Certificate of Education, Kenya Advanced Certificate of Education, Tanzanian Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education, Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education, University of Malta Advanced Matriculation examinations and ZIMSEC GCE A level 2003 and onwards.

HONG KONG A LEVEL

Scores are calculated on the basis of three Academic Advanced level subjects where A=5, B=4, C=3, D=2, E=1. Advanced Supplementary level results may be included based on A=2.5, B=2, C=1.5, D=1, E=0.5. An extra point can be added for each of the following subjects studied at Advanced level: Pure or Applied Mathematics, Biology, Physics, Chemistry.

INDIA (AISSC)

Refers to the All India Senior School Certificate (AISSC), awarded by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). Scores are calculated on the basis that A1=5, A2=4.5, B1=3.5, B2=3, C1=2, C2=1.5, D1=1, D2=0.5. The selection score is based on best four externally examined academic subjects. Regional languages will not be considered for this calculation.

INDIA (ISC)

Refers to the Indian School Certificate (ISC), awarded by the Indian Council of School Examinations (ICSE). The selection score is based on percentage grade average in the best four externally examined academic subjects. Regional languages will not be considered for this calculation.

OSSD/ICPU

Represents the Ontario Secondary School Diploma and the International Canadian Pre-University program. Scores are calculated from the average of six University Preparation Courses.

SINGAPORE A LEVEL

Scores are calculated from the results in three H2 level subjects, where A=5, B=4, C=3, D=2, E=1. Students must also present an H1 content-based subject, Project Work and the General Paper (or Knowledge Enquiry), and these scores are added to the total on the basis that A=2.5, B=2, C=1.5, D=1, E=0.5.

USA SAT

Scores represent the total of the Critical Reading, Mathematical and Writing test scores in the SAT Reasoning Test. Students must present a completed US High School Diploma or equivalent secondary studies in addition to their SAT scores to be considered for admission.

Example comparison table:

ACT course	ATAR score	IB Dipl	GAO KAO	GCE A Level	HK A Level	AISSC	ISC	OSSD/ICPU	S'pore A Level	USA SAT
Bachelor of Ministry	75	27	500	7	5.5	9	75	62	14	1690

Important: students should consult with their proposed enrolling college and not assume the above scores will grant them entry. They are to be taken as a guide only.



FORMALISING YOUR ENROLMENT

Once you have been accepted by an ACT affiliated college, they will formalise your enrolment by way of providing you with a written agreement. The written agreement must be entered into before or at the same time as the provider accepts course money from the student. That agreement will:

- identify the course in which you are to be enrolled, and any conditions placed on that enrolment;
- provide an itemised list of course money payable by you;
- provide information in relation to refunds;
- set out what happens with the personal information you provide (see also details later in this Handbook);
- advise you of your obligation to notify them of any changes to your contact details while enrolled;
- provide the following information in relation to refunds of course money in the case of student and provider default
 - amounts that may or may not be repaid to the student (including any course money collected by education agents on behalf of the registered provider);
 - processes for claiming a refund;
 - a plain English explanation of what happens in the event of a course not being delivered; and
 - a statement that "This agreement, and the availability of complaints and appeals processes does not remove the right of the student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws."

The written agreement is a legal contract. You should read it carefully and make sure you fully understand what it says before signing it. Once the agreement is signed or otherwise accepted, the ACT and the student must follow whatever is set out in the written agreement. You should keep a copy of it. Should you ever make a complaint, you will need to refer to your written agreement.



PAYMENT OF TUITION FEES

Please refer to your enrolling ACT's affiliated college for the procedure of payments. Information on tuition fees and Refund Policy is in the Policy section of this Handbook.



ISSUANCE OF CONFIRMATION OF ENROLMENT (CoE)

A Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) provides evidence of a student's enrolment with the Australian College of Theology (ACT). This evidence is required before the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) will issue a student visa. The CoE contains information about the Provider, course and duration of study in which the student has enrolled. By the ACT issuing a CoE we are verifying that the the ACT has accepted the student. It is an offense under section 19 of the ESOS Act to provide false or misleading information about accepted students. Therefore the information provided on an CoE must be true and correct at the time of issuing.

All international students must have a CoE for each course they apply for. An extension CoE can only be issued if you can demonstrate that you have been unable to complete your course on time as a result of an approved reduction of study load due to compassionate or compelling circumstances, an activated intervention strategy or an approved leave of absence.

When Do You Need a New Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)?

Any time that there is a change in your course duration, you will need a CoE that reflects the change. This means that during your study at the ACT, you may have multiple CoE's. You should always keep the latest CoE. Please find below all the reasons that you will need a new CoE:

- Advanced Standing
The ACT offers advanced standing (credit transfer) to students who have successfully completed courses or parts of courses at other universities and colleges. This may shorten the timeframe on your CoE and therefore affect your Student Visa. If the advanced standing placed on your record has affected your CoE, then you will be automatically issued a new CoE for the appropriate timeframe.
- Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances
Compassionate or compelling circumstances are defined as circumstances beyond the control of the student and which may have an impact on the student's course progress or wellbeing. If you have compassionate or compelling circumstances, then you are able to apply to reduce your study load. If your application is approved, you will automatically be issued with a new CoE for the appropriate timeframe.
- Intervention Strategy
An intervention strategy is a plan of action created by your Academic Dean in an attempt to address and reduce the causes of academic failure during your time. It has been developed to offer students on a course progress status of referral or probation with additional assistance. This strategy is designed to promote your future success in your studies. An intervention strategy may, depending on your circumstances, lengthen the duration of your course. If the intervention strategy affects the duration of your course, then you will be automatically issued with a new CoE for the appropriate timeframe.
- Leave of Absence
If you wish to take a break from your studies and have an approved Leave of Absence, it will lengthen the time that you need to complete your degree. DIBP will be informed of the break in your study, and you will be automatically issued with a new CoE for the appropriate timeframe.



ARRANGING VISAS

Most overseas students wanting to study in Australia require a student visa. Some other visa holders are also eligible to study as overseas students in Australia. All applications for a Student visa (subclass 500) will generally be required to be lodged online by creating an account in ImmiAccount. See ImmiAccount for more information. The visa application process can be complicated and for students from some countries it may be better to submit an application with the assistance of an accredited agent due to their familiarity and experience in the field. The ACT does not employ the use of education agents. The following are the student visa subclasses:

Visa subclasses:

- Starting 01 July 2016:
Student visa sub-class 500
- Before 01 July 2016:
Student visa sub-classes:
 - a. Subclass 573 (Higher Education)
Covers an Undergraduate Diploma, Bachelor degree, Associate Degree, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma and masters by coursework
 - b. Subclass 574 (Postgraduate Research)
Covers a Masters degree by Research and Doctoral degrees.

You must ensure you allow enough time for processing between lodging your application and the start of your academic program, as it can be a lengthy process depending on your country of origin.

Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP)

The Australian Government's Department of Immigration and Border Protection provides comprehensive information about student visa requirements and the application process, as well as application document checklists to assist you with your application. Visit www.immi.gov.au/students/index.htm for the latest information.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

As well as links from the DIBP website the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website www.dfat.gov.au/embassies.html as a comprehensive list of Australian embassies, high commissions, consulates and representative offices around the world.

Migration Agents

A migration agent can assist you in submitting your visa application and communicate with DIBP on your behalf, but please note that you do not need to use a migration agent to lodge any kind of visa application.

Education Agents

The ACT and its affiliated colleges do not use Education Agents.



STUDENT VISA REQUIREMENTS

SIMPLIFIED STUDENT VISA FRAMEWORK (SSVF)

From 1 July 2016, a single immigration risk framework applies to all international students and replaces the previous streamlined visa processing and Assessment Level frameworks. All overseas students apply for a single Student visa (subclass 500), regardless of the chosen course of study. For current visa holders (subclass 570 to 576), visa will remain valid and visa conditions will not change after 01 July 2016. See DIBP website for more details.

Under the SSVF, the combined immigration risk outcomes of the student's education provider and country of citizenship will be used to guide the level of documentary evidence of English language and financial capacity that the student needs to provide with their visa application.

Online document checklist tool for students

The Online document checklist tool advises students about the documentation they need to provide with their visa application based on their combined country provider immigration risk outcomes. The tool can be found at <http://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Visa-1/500->.

KEY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE STUDENT VISA (SUBCLASS 500)

GENUINE TEMPORARY ENTRANT (GTE) REQUIREMENT

To be granted any student visa, applicants must satisfy the DIBP that they have a genuine intention to stay in Australia temporarily. When assessing the GTE requirement, DIBP needs to be satisfied that the student visa applicant genuinely intends to stay in Australia temporarily having regard to:

- the applicant's circumstances
- the applicant's immigration history
- if the applicant is a minor – the intention of a parent, legal guardian or spouse of the applicant
- any other relevant matter.

The GTE requirement provides a useful way to help identify those applicants who are using the student visa programme for motives other than gaining a quality education.

ENROLMENT IN A REGISTERED COURSE OF STUDY

International students must generally be enrolled in a registered course of study and provide a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) when they lodge their student visa application.

Information collected through the eCoE process includes the student visa application, visa grant and visa compliance data from a student's arrival in Australia and course commencement through to their departure from Australia.

Exceptions to this requirement apply to Foreign Affairs and Defence sponsored students (Letter of Support from Foreign Affairs and Defence); secondary exchange students (an Acceptance Advice of Secondary Exchange Students form); and postgraduate research students required to remain in Australia for marking of their thesis.

FINANCIAL CAPACITY AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

All international students are required to have sufficient funds to cover their course fees and living costs in Australia. While student visa holders are able to work a specified number of hours in Australia, they should not rely on working to cover their course fees and living costs.

As part of the visa application process, students may be required to provide evidence of their financial capacity and English language proficiency. This will be guided by the immigration risk outcomes associated with the student's country of citizenship and intended education provider.

HEALTH AND CHARACTER

International students are required to be of good character and will generally need to undertake a health examination as part of their student visa application. Students must also obtain Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) before a student visa can be granted.

Note: where you are under 18 years of age, acceptable arrangements for your accommodation, support and general welfare are in place. However, the ACT does not admit overseas students under the age of 18 years.

EVIDENTIARY REQUIREMENTS

STREAMLINED EVIDENTIARY REQUIREMENTS

Under the SSVF, students associated with the lowest immigration risk will generally have streamlined evidentiary requirements. This means that these students will generally be able to satisfy DIBP of students' financial capacity by providing a declaration and a Confirmation of Enrolment which shows that they have met their education provider's English language requirements. The DIBP will however retain the discretion to seek further evidence where appropriate.

Regular evidentiary requirements

a. Financial capacity

Under the SSVF, all student visa applicants must have sufficient funds available for the duration of their stay in Australia.

Students associated with higher immigration risk, based on their country and education provider immigration risk outcomes, will generally need to provide documentary evidence of financial capacity with their visa application.

Where additional evidence of financial capacity is required, the student will be able to provide this as one of the following:

- evidence of funds to cover travel to Australia and 12 months' living, course fees and (for school-aged dependants) schooling costs for the student and accompanying family members
- evidence of meeting the annual income requirement
- an Acceptance Advice of Secondary Exchange Students (AASES) form, for secondary exchange students only.

The annual income option requires students to provide evidence of personal annual income of at least AUD 60,000. For students accompanied by family members, the amount is AUD 70,000 or more. The income demonstrated must be the personal income of the student's spouse or parents only. In circumstances where both the student's parents are working, their combined income can be considered for this requirement. In all cases, the evidence of annual income must be in the form of official government documentation, such as a tax assessment.

The 12-month living costs requirement is broadly similar to the requirement that applied to Assessment Level 2 students prior to 1 July 2016. The type of evidence, where required, includes money deposit or loan with a financial institution, government loan, scholarship or sponsorship.

Living cost amounts

From 1 July 2016, the 12 month living cost will be:

- Student/guardian - AUD 19,830
- Partner/spouse - AUD 6,940
- Child - AUD 2,970

Consumer Price Index (CPI) indexation

Financial amounts including annual income, living costs and schooling costs will be regularly reviewed and adjusted in line with the CPI figures for the previous calendar year.

b. International English language requirements

Where evidence of English language proficiency is required, one of the following minimum English language test scores will be accepted:

- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) overall band score of 5.5
- IELTS overall band score of 5 when packaged with at least 10 weeks' English Language Intensive Course for Overseas Students (ELICOS)
- IELTS overall band score of 4.5 when packaged with at least 20 weeks' ELICOS.

The equivalent of the above minimum IELTS test scores from the following English language providers will also be accepted:

- Test of English as a Foreign Language paper based test (TOEFL)
- Pearson Test of English Academic
- Cambridge English: Advanced
- Occupational English Test.

c. Evidence of enrolment

International students outside Australia must be enrolled in a registered course of study and provide a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) when they lodge their Student visa application.

Students in Australia can still apply with a letter of offer or a CoE but must obtain a CoE to be granted the visa.

Existing exceptions to these requirements will continue to apply to Foreign Affairs and Defence sponsored students (Letter of Support from Foreign Affairs/ Defence); secondary exchange students (an Acceptance Advice of Secondary Exchange Students form); and postgraduate research students required to remain in Australia for marking of their thesis (letter from their education provider).

d. Course transfers

From 1 July 2016, a new condition will be introduced which requires all Student (subclass 500) visa holders to maintain enrolment at the same level or a higher Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) level for which they were granted a visa, unless they are undertaking a doctoral degree (AQF10) and transfer to a master's degree (AQF9).

Transferring to a lower AQF level course or transferring from an AQF level course to a non-AQF Award course would be in breach of the student visa condition and might result in the visa being cancelled. Students who want to change to a lower level course must apply for, and be granted, a new student visa before they change their course.



STUDENT VISA CONDITIONS AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

STUDENT VISA CONDITIONS

If you are granted a visa, you must abide by its conditions. Failure to comply with these conditions could result in the cancellation of your visa. Different visa conditions apply to you and your family members. You can check your visa conditions in Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO).

Below are the visa conditions for students:

- You cannot work more than 40 hours per fortnight when your course is in session (other than work which has been registered as a part of the course). You can work for more than 40 hours per fortnight during recognised vacation periods offered by your education provider. You cannot start paid work until you have started your course in Australia. No work limits apply if you are studying a Masters by research or Doctorate course in Australia.
- You must remain enrolled in a registered course (unless you are a Foreign Affairs or Defence sponsored student or secondary exchange student in which case you must maintain full-time enrolment in your course of study or training). A registered course is one that is on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS).
- You must maintain enrolment in a registered course that is the same level as, or at a higher level than, the registered course for which you were granted a visa.

- For changing course for visa 500 holder: If you already have a student visa to study in Australia and wish to change your main course of study to a lower Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) level course or a non-AQF level course, you will generally need to obtain a new student visa. You will not need to obtain a new visa if you are changing from an AQF level 10 course (doctoral degree) to an AQF 9 course (Masters degree).

More information is available if you hold a student visa (subclasses 570-576) and are thinking of changing course. Select your visa from the list below:

- Independent ELICOS Sector visa (subclass 570)
 - School Sector visa (subclass 571)
 - Vocational Education and Training Sector visa (subclass 572)
 - Higher Education Sector visa (subclass 573)
 - Postgraduate Research Sector visa (subclass 574)
 - Non Award Sector visa (subclass 575)
 - Foreign Affairs or Defence Sector visa (subclass 576).
- You must maintain satisfactory attendance in your course and course progress for each study period as required by your education provider.
 - You must maintain adequate arrangements for health insurance during your stay in Australia.
 - You must continue to satisfy the requirements for grant of your student visa. This means, for example, that you continue to have sufficient financial capacity to support your study and stay in Australia.
 - You must maintain adequate schooling arrangements for your school-age dependents who joined you in Australia for more than 3 months as part of your student visa application.
 - You must tell your education provider:
 - the address where you live in Australia within seven days of arriving in Australia
 - if you change the address where you live within seven days of the change
 - if you change education provider within seven days of receiving the electronic confirmation of enrolment certificate or evidence of enrolment.

You must comply with the state and territory laws of Australia.

There are visa conditions specific to DFAT/Defence sponsored students and all Iranian citizens studying higher education or postgraduate courses.

For a full list of mandatory and discretionary student visa conditions please visit

<http://www.immi.gov.au/students/visa-conditions-students.htm>

THE ESOS ACT

The Australian Government has laws in place to protect all international students and promote quality education. These laws are known as the ESOS legislative framework and they comprise:

1. Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000
2. Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Regulations 2001
3. The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (National Code)
4. Education Services for Overseas Students (Registration Charges) Act 1997
5. ESOS Assurance Fund Act.

The ESOS laws protect overseas students coming to Australia on student visas and they set out clear roles and responsibilities for education institutions registered to teach international students.

All international students studying in Australia have rights under the ESOS framework, including to:

- Receive, before enrolling, current and accurate information about the courses, fees, modes of study and other information from the education provider and the provider's agent.
- Sign a written agreement with the provider before or as you pay fees, setting out the services to be provided, fees payable and information about refunds of course money.
- Get the education you paid for. The ESOS framework includes consumer protection that will allow you to receive a refund or to be placed in another course if your provider is unable to teach your course.

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- Access to support services that provide students with assistance and guidance with such matters as: applying for course credit; deferral, suspension, or cancellation of courses; how to use your provider's complaints and appeals process; and changing providers.

Moreover, the National Code establish standards for registered providers which set out the obligations on registered providers in delivering education and training to overseas students. This include that students are monitored to:

- Complete the course within the duration specified in the CoE.
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress and satisfactory attendance.
- Remain with the principal education provider for 6 calendar months, unless issued a letter of release from the provider to attend another institution.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

The information provided by you as an overseas student to the Australian College of Theology may be made available to Commonwealth and State agencies and the Fund Manager of the Educational Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Assurance Fund, pursuant to obligations under the ESOS Act 2000 and the National Code. This information includes personal and contact details, course enrolment details and changes, and the circumstances of any suspected breach of a student visa condition.

The ACT is required, under section 19 of the ESOS Act 2000, to tell the Department about: (i) certain changes to your enrolment; and (ii) any breach by you of a student visa condition relating to attendance or satisfactory academic performance.

Agreement to the above, and the availability of complaints and appeals processes, does not remove your right to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws.



ARRANGING TRAVEL

You will need to make your own travel arrangements to Australia. Your affiliated college will notify you regarding how soon before the start of Overseas Student Orientation you should arrive to allow enough time for settling-in, adjusting to the climate and overcoming jet-lag.

DOCUMENTS

You should prepare a folder of official documents to bring with you to Australia, including:

- Valid passport with Student Visa
- Offer of a place / admission letter from your enrolling college
- Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE) issued by the ACT
- Receipts of payments (e.g. tuition fees, OSHC, bank statements etc.)
- Insurance policies
- Original or certified copies of your academic transcripts and qualifications
- Other personal identification documents, e.g. birth certificate, ID card, driver's licence
- Medical records and/or prescriptions

If you are travelling with your family you will need to include their documents as well. Keep all documents in your carry-on luggage. In case you lose the originals, make copies that can be left behind with family and sent to you.

WHAT TO BRING

Students are often surprised by how strict Australian Customs Services and Quarantine can be. If you're in doubt about whether your goods are prohibited or not, declare it anyway on the Incoming Passenger Card which you will receive on the plane. Students have received on the spot fines for not declaring items. Visit the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources homepage <http://www.agriculture.gov.au/travelling/arriving-in-australia>.

Baggage allowances flying into Australia will vary according to your carrier, flight class and country of origin. Please check with your carrier prior to departure. Economy passengers are generally permitted 1 x checked luggage (35kg) and 1 x carry-on (7kg) for international flights, but only 20kg of checked luggage on domestic flights within Australia. This will significantly limit the amount of things you can bring, especially if

you will fly within Australia to get to your final destination. Therefore, it is essential to think the packing process through very carefully. You will be able to purchase most things upon arrival in Australia but the price may be higher than in your own country.

SEASONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Summer in Australia is from December to February, autumn from March to May, winter from June to August, and spring from September to November. For most of the country the hottest months are January and February. If you arrive in June or July, the coldest months of the year, you may need to bring or buy winter clothing and blankets. You may also need to purchase a heating appliance once you arrive.

CLOTHING

On most campuses, students usually dress informally. Jeans or trousers with t-shirts or blouses, sneakers or "running shoes" are almost standard dress. Shorts are often worn during the summer months and sandals are the most common footwear. It is acceptable for both men and women to wear shorts and sleeveless t-shirts although clothing should be neither too tight nor too brief so as to cause offence. This is common during the hotter months. A sports coat or suit and tie for men and appropriate dress for women is necessary for some functions such as formal dinners, a graduation ceremony, student dances or balls. For festive occasions, you may want to bring traditional dress and accessories. Most primary and secondary school students will be required to wear a school uniform to classes and other school activities. You should check with your education provider what is included in the uniform package.

Other items you might need to include (most can also be purchased in Australia):

- alarm clock
- bath towels, bed sheets, pillow cases
- dictionary (bilingual)
- small sewing kit
- music CDs or iPod
- sporting equipment
- toiletries
- umbrella
- scientific or graphics calculator
- camera
- micro recorder for lectures
- spare spectacles or contact lenses
- your optical prescription
- photos of friends and family
- swimming costume
- small gifts from home
- medications or prescriptions

The standard voltage for electrical items in Australia is 240V. Electric plugs have three flat pins one of which is an earth pin. You may need to buy an adaptor or have the plugs changed when you arrive.

BRINGING YOUR COMPUTER

Bringing a PC or laptop into Australia may be a little more complicated. Items owned and used for more than 12 months prior to arrival are allowed in tax-free. Proof of the date of purchase and purchase price may be required. Computers which are less than 12 months old and over AU\$400 may attract Goods and Services tax (GST) at a rate of 10%. Consideration is given as to whether or not you intend to export the computer at the conclusion of your studies. To satisfy the Customs Officer that you will be taking the computer out of Australia you should bring along a statutory declaration (a written declaration witnessed by the certifying authority in your country) stating that the computer is for use during your studies in Australia, and that you intend to take it back with you when you complete your studies. You may be required to give an undertaking under Section 162 to this effect and provide a cash security to Australia Customs upon arrival.

MOBILE PHONES & LAPTOPS

If you are considering bringing a mobile phone, laptop, or any communication devices we suggest that you visit the Australian Communications and Media Authority www.acma.gov.au before making any purchases. Some students have brought in their own laptops with internal modems only to discover that they were unable to use their modem in Australia. Any external or built-in modems must be Austel Approved in order to function in Australia.



SAFETY INFORMATION

EMERGENCIES – DIAL 000

The Triple Zero (000) service is the quickest way to get the right emergency service to help you. It should be used to contact Police, Fire or Ambulance services in life threatening or emergency situations only. Emergency 000 lines should not be used for general medical assistance.

POLICE

Police Assistance Line – 131 444

Crime Stoppers – 1800 333 000

In Australia police protect people and properties, detect and prevent crime, and preserve peace for everyone. They are not connected to the military or politics. The police can help you feel safe. In a non-emergency situation you can contact the local police station directly.

FIRE

The fire brigade and Country Fire Authority (CFA) extinguish fires, rescue people from fires in cars and buildings, and help in situations where gas or chemicals become a danger. As soon as a fire starts call 000 no matter how small or large the fire may be.

AMBULANCE

Ambulances provide immediate medical attention and emergency transportation to hospital.

Dial 000

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

The State Emergency Service (SES) is an emergency and rescue service dedicated to providing assistance in natural disasters, rescues, road crashes and extreme weather conditions. It is made up almost entirely of volunteers and operates in all States and Territories in Australia. For emergency assistance in a FLOOD or STORM dial 132 500.

LIFELINE

Lifeline's 13 11 14 service is staffed by trained volunteer telephone counsellors who are ready to take calls 24-hour a day, any day of the week from anywhere in Australia. These volunteers operate from Lifeline Centres in every State and Territory around Australia. Anyone can call Lifeline. The service offers a counselling service that respects everyone's right to be heard, understood and cared for. They also provide information about other support services that are available in communities around Australia. Lifeline telephone counsellors are ready to talk and listen no matter how big or how small the problem might seem. They are trained to offer emotional support in times of crisis or when callers may be feeling low or in need of advice.

POISONS INFORMATION LINE

The poisons information line provides the public and health professionals with prompt, up-to-date and appropriate information, and advice to assist in the management of poisonings and suspected poisonings. The seriousness of a poisoning situation is assessed after a detailed history is obtained from the caller. Members of the public may be then given first aid instructions, information on possible symptoms, and advised on the need for assessment by a doctor or referral to hospital. The Australia-wide Poisons Information Centres have a common telephone number: 131 126.

EMERGENCY TRANSLATION

For translation service in an emergency situation dial 1300 655 010

FAMILY SAFETY PACK BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

The pack includes four factsheets on the following topics:

- domestic and family violence
- sexual assault
- forced and early marriage
- family violence and partner visas.

The pack also includes a low literacy storyboard and can be accessed at - <https://www.dss.gov.au/family-safety-pack>.

If you or someone you know is in danger call the police on 000. Police in Australia are safe and can be trusted.

For free, confidential counselling and information call 1800 RESPECT on 1800 737 732.

If you need a free interpreter call 131 450.



ORIENTATION

Your enrolling college will provide an Overseas Student Orientation before the commencement of classes and often before commencing local students attend an orientation. It is a requirement of the ESOS (Education Services for Overseas Students) Act 2000. Staff who run the orientation work hard to ensure that you as a student will be well equipped to achieve the best possible success in your studies. If you read through the pre-departure, arrival, and orientation manuals which the institution provides for you, you will see that there is a lot of information for you to understand and consider as you move through your studies. Although the manual will outline what you need to know, it is impossible to understand and recall everything. Once you are concentrating on your studies, you will feel less stressed if you are already comfortable with the institution, the staff and services.

Arriving early to attend orientation gives you the chance to:

- Know about the following:
 - student support services available to students in the transition to life and study in a new environment
 - legal services
 - emergency and health services
 - facilities and resources
 - complaints and appeals processes, and
 - any student visa condition relating to course progress and/or attendance as appropriate.
- See and talk to the most important people you will need to know at the institution:
 - Overseas Office staff and their duties
 - Course or Academic Advisor
 - ESL Advisor (English as a Second Language)
 - Student Services staff
 - Religious/Cultural/Ministry staff
 - Accommodation/Homestay Coordinator
 - Counsellors
- Enrol early (at some colleges) which will help you to get your student card early. You will need your student card to open bank accounts, borrow books from the library, and more.
- Meet and get advice from your Academic or Course Advisor
- Meet representatives of Student Associations, Clubs, and Mentors
- Find your way around the campus
 - Library
 - Computer rooms and facilities
 - Recreation and eating areas
 - Clubs and Associations
 - Classrooms
- Meet other students who may share your classes, share your concerns or fears.
- Knowing another face on campus as you become more comfortable with the routines can really help you avoid any feelings of isolation.
- Find your way around the public transport/ City/ to and from your accommodation.
- Feel as though you already know some of the things local students know before you get to meet them at orientation activities later.



STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

ACT and its affiliated colleges provide a range of programs and services to enhance the transition, engagement, and overall student experience of the ACT's overseas students. We have resources and facilities to support you throughout your studies.

The following are some of the programs and services provided to overseas students (this may differ per college):

- **Academic, Language, and Learning Support:**

- Academic coaching and counselling
- Seminars on essay writing, exam preparation and critical thinking.
- Study skills program or workshop
- Editorial assistance
- Study groups
- Pastoral care
- Course progress planners
- General tutor service

- **Welfare related support services**

Affiliated colleges assist students by providing information, support, advice, and referrals on a range of issues including financial, legal, educational and welfare concerns. Students can also receive advice and information on grievances and appeals.

The student support officers are available to overseas students to help them access study support and welfare-related services such as;

- Legal Services – ACT and the affiliated colleges can refer a student who requires a legal practitioner, the referral is at no cost to the student. Student would be responsible for any cost related to the legal advice provided.
- Accommodation – Accommodation advice and assistance is available to all overseas students free of charge. The fees for external agencies will be at the cost of the student. Some of the affiliated colleges have their accommodation services.
- Emergency and Health Services – During orientation students are advised on campus safety and how to access emergency and health services in Australia. For non-urgent services students are encouraged to talk with their college's point of contact. For medical or other emergencies students are instructed to contact the appropriate services, eg 000 and inform the enrolling college as soon as appropriate.
- Facilities and Resources – At orientation students are given a guided tour of the campus and all facilities and during that process they will become aware of all the resources available to them.
- Complaints and appeals processes – The complaints and appeals policy and procedure is detailed on the website and made available from administration at anytime. The policy is specifically explained both in the Student Handbook and during orientation.
- Any student visa condition relating to course progress and or attendance as appropriate – Students are advised at orientation of their requirements to continue to meet their visa conditions. Specifically the expectations for course progress and attendance (for ELICOS students) are laid out in the Student Handbook and explained during orientation



ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

MONITORING OF COURSE PROGRESS AND COMPLETION

The ACT and its affiliated colleges monitor the enrolment of all overseas students at the beginning of every semester to ensure that you are completing your course within the duration specified on your CoE (Confirmation of Enrolment), without exceeding the allowable limit (25%) of distance or online learning, and ensuring that you are studying at least one unit in full attendance mode per study period.

In addition to this, academic performance is also being monitored at the end of every semester to ensure you are maintaining satisfactory academic course progress. The ACT has a Progression and Intervention Policy which students ought to be familiar with. The policy can be accessed at: <http://www.actheology.edu.au/policies.php>

If you are at risk of not meeting the course progress requirements, an intervention strategy will be implemented that focuses on interviewing and counselling you and assisting you to achieve that satisfactory level of academic progression required of all ACT students.

In order to progress without comment you are required to pass more than 50% of enrolled credit points each study period. If this is the case, you will be assessed as satisfactory (unless you were previously on conditional enrolment).

If you fail 50% or more of the enrolled credit points in a study period, you will be assessed as marginal. You will then be required to be counselled by your academic advisor though you are not prevented from progressing to the next period of study.

If you again fail 50% or more of your units in the next consecutive study period, you will be assessed as unsatisfactory. This means you will be notified of the ACT's intention to report you to DIBP for unsatisfactory course progress. If you appeal this action and are successful, you would be required to accept academic counselling and agree to be placed on conditional enrolment.

If you have been placed on "conditional enrolment" and in the next consecutive study period again fail 50% or more of the enrolled credit points you shall be assessed as unsatisfactory and be excluded from the College for one (1) year. If you have been placed on "conditional enrolment" and not in the next consecutive study period but some future study period again fails 50% or more of the enrolled credit points you shall be assessed as poor and shall again be placed on conditional enrolment for the next year of study.

Failing the same unit more than once

If you fail an *elective* unit on two occasions you shall be assessed as unsatisfactory for the unit and be excluded from that unit. If you fail a *compulsory* unit twice you shall be assessed as poor and be placed on "conditional enrolment" for the next year of study. If you fail a *compulsory* unit for a third time you shall be assessed as unsatisfactory and you will be notified of the ACT's intention to report you to DIBP for unsatisfactory course progress.

Course completion within course duration

Overseas students must at all times be in a position to complete their course in the time-frame of their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) in order to be deemed to be maintaining satisfactory course progress. There is an enrolment limit of 20 credit points per semester in all awards, meaning that where it is no longer possible for a student to catch up and complete their course by the end date of the CoE at the rate of 20 credit points per semester, he/she will be deemed to no longer be maintaining satisfactory course progress and the ACT is required to take action against the student under the ESOS Act, which may result in the cancellation of the student's CoE, the notification to DIBP, and subsequent cancellation of the student's Australian student visa.

Appeals

If you have had a load intervention or a sanction applied to you under this policy, you have the right of appeal against the application of that sanction. To appeal successfully, you must demonstrate that special circumstances contributed to your poor/unsatisfactory academic performance. Grounds other than special circumstances will be considered when you are appealing exclusion from the College for failure to complete a course by expected completion date. Students have twenty (20) working days to access the complaints and appeals process.

Intervention strategies

When you are deemed to be at risk of not achieving satisfactory course progress, the Registrar of your enrolled college will activate an intervention strategy to counsel the student and assist the student to meet satisfactory course progress such as –

- receiving individual case management
- attending study skills workshops
- receiving assistance with personal issues which are influencing progress
- attending supervised study groups
- receiving tutorial support assistance

- reducing the enrolment load
- a combination of the above



MONITORING COURSE ATTENDANCE

The ACT's affiliated colleges record the attendance of each student to each face-to-face class, be it lecture, seminar or tutorial. The ACT expects 100% attendance normally, but does recognise that circumstances can prevent a student from getting to a class. To achieve satisfactory attendance, you are required to attend at least 80% of the scheduled unit contact hours. In case of non-attendance, you are asked to either notify both the lecturer and affiliated college Registrar of your anticipated non-attendance at a class, or to notify them as soon as possible of your reasons for not attending a class.

If you are at risk of not attending at least 80% of the scheduled unit contact hours, you will be contacted by the affiliated college Registrar and counselled regarding your situation. At this stage, the student is identified as 'at risk' of not meeting satisfactory course progress and an intervention strategy must be implemented.

As an overseas student, you are allowed to take no more than 25% of your total course by distance or online learning modes. In addition, you are not allowed to enrol exclusively in online and/or distance mode. You must enrol in at least one face-to-face unit every study period.

Where you have been assessed as not achieving satisfactory attendance for the course in which you are enrolled, you will be notified in writing of the ACT's intention to report you to DIBP for not achieving satisfactory attendance.

TRANSFER BETWEEN REGISTERED PROVIDERS

The full policy is available and should be accessed through the ACT Website at <http://www.acttheology.edu.au/policies.php>.

ACT overseas students are restricted from transferring to another provider, and the ACT will not enrol a student wishing to transfer from another registered provider's course to the ACT prior to the student completing a minimum of six months of that principal course except where:

- The original provider has ceased to be registered;
- The course in which the student is enrolled has ceased to be registered;
- The original provider has provided a written letter of release;
- The original provider has had a sanction imposed on its registration that prevents the student from continuing his/her course;
- Any government sponsor of the student considers the change to be in the student's best interest and has provided written support for that change.

Process:

- Students wishing to transfer from the ACT before they have completed six months of study in their principal course for reasons other than those outlined above must apply to the Director of Academic Services for a letter of release. The request for a letter of release must contain a written explanation, and supporting evidence, of the reasons for the compassionate or compelling case, as well as a letter from another registered provider confirming that a valid enrolment offer has been made.
- Students wishing to transfer to the ACT before they have completed six month of study in their principal course for reasons other than those outlined above will need to request a letter of release from their primary provider. Once a letter of release has been provided, students are welcome to approach the ACT and its affiliated colleges for application to a course, and for a CoE to be issued.

Circumstances where a transfer will be granted

1. The new course is deemed to be in the best interest of the student's future career.
2. Compassionate and compelling circumstances as determined by the Director of Academic Services.
3. The student is struggling academically and that the course is not appropriate and there are no relevant alternatives at ACT.
4. If the student claims or can provide evidence that his or her reasonable expectation about the current course are not being met.

5. The student has evidence that they have accessed ACT and affiliated college's support services available to them, and that the student has shown evidence of a genuine effort to engage with these support services to seek resolution of any difficulties they are encountering in progressing in their course.

If granted such a letter of release, students are reminded that they will need to contact their nearest DIBP office to seek advice on whether a new student visa is required.

The ACT will grant a letter of release at no cost to a student when the student has provided a letter from another registered provider confirming that a valid enrolment offer has been made.

The ACT will maintain a record of all requests from students for a letter of release and the assessment of, and decision regarding, the request on the student's file.

Circumstances where a transfer may be refused

1. The request is made within the first four weeks of the principal course commencing.
2. If the ACT determines that the transfer would be detrimental to the student's future study plans.
3. The ACT believes that the student is trying to avoid being reported to DIBP for failure to meet the ACT's attendance or academic progress requirements.
4. It is believed the student is deliberately trying to manipulate the Australian student visa system.
5. The student has not exhausted access to ACT's support services for assistance with study or personal issues.
6. Where the student has outstanding fees to ACT or affiliated colleges.
7. Claims of financial hardship.
8. The student decides they would prefer to study at an institution with lower fees.
9. Change of mind.

ACT reserves the right to take into consideration other factors, including individual circumstances of a student, which may not have been specified above.

If the ACT does not grant the student's request for a letter of release, the student will be provided with a written reason for the refusal. The student also has the right to appeal the decision in accordance with the ACT's *Grievance Resolution Policy for Overseas Students*.

The ACT will maintain a record of all requests from students for a letter of release and the assessment of, and decision regarding, the request on the student's file.

Timeframe for response to a student's request for transfer

The ACT will attempt to respond to all students' requests for transfers within five business days of receipt of the request. The ACT will maintain a record of all requests from students for a letter of release and the assessment of, and decision regarding, the request on the student's file.



EXTENSION, SUSPENSION, DEFERMENT OR CANCELLATION OF ENROLMENT

Under the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007 (the National Code), registered providers may only enable students to defer or temporarily suspend their studies, including granting a leave of absence, during the course through formal agreement in certain limited circumstances.

The ACT can only defer or temporarily suspend the enrolment of the student on the grounds of:

- a. compassionate or compelling circumstances, or
- b. misbehavior by the student.

Compassionate or compelling circumstances could include, but are not limited to:

- serious illness or injury with a medical certificate stating that you were unable to attend classes;
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents;
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in your home country requiring emergency travel when this has impacted on your study;
- a traumatic experience which could include involvement in or witnessing a serious accident, witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime (supported by a police or psychologist's report);
- the college's inability to offer a prerequisite unit;
- unavailability of units

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- inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa.

The ACT will:

- a. inform the student that deferring, suspending or cancelling his or her enrolment may affect his or her student visa; and
- b. notify the Department of Education via PRISMS as required under section 19 of the ESOS Act where the student's enrolment is deferred, temporarily suspended or cancelled.

PROCEDURE

Cancellation, deferral or suspension of your enrolment may be initiated by yourself or the college.

A. Deferment of commencement and suspension of study requested by student

1. Overseas student must advise the ACT through its affiliated college in writing of their request accompanied by documentation evidencing the compassionate or compelling reasons why deferment or suspension of study should be granted.
2. The request is forwarded to the Director of Academic Services for consideration and approval. The ACT will always use its professional judgement to assess each student's case on its individual merits when determining whether compassionate or compelling circumstances exist. ACT does not authorise and report a deferment or suspension retrospectively unless there are unusual circumstances where it may be required.
3. In the event that the request for deferment or suspension of study is approved, the ACT will inform the student of the decision in writing within five working days.
4. The ACT will also inform the student that deferment or suspension of study may have an impact on the student visa and will advise to contact DIBP to discuss the impact of this change to the student's enrolment.
5. The ACT's Overseas Students Liaison Officer (OSLO) or the College registrar will inform DIBP of this change of enrolment thru PRISMS. Deferment will be recorded on PRISMS depending on the status of the CoE. While suspension will be recorded on PRISMS. The student will be provided with the new CoE.
6. If the request for deferment of commencement of study or suspension of study does not meet the requirements for compassionate and compelling circumstances, ACT will not approve the application and will advise the student in writing within five working days of the reason for the decision and that the student has 20 working days to appeal the decision through ACT's Grievance Resolution Policy for Overseas Students.
7. If the student chooses to access ACT's Grievance Resolution policy, the student's enrolment will be maintained until the internal appeal process is completed and ACT will not notify DepEd/DIBP of any change to the student's enrolment status.
8. The request for deferment or suspension of study, any accompanying evidence and a copy of the written advice to the student of the decision will be placed on the student's file.

B. Suspension or cancellation of enrolment by the Australian College of Theology

The ACT will inform the student of the suspension or cancellation of enrolment in writing. The student will be informed that they have 20 working days to access the appeal process depending on the ground of suspension or cancellation of enrolment:

The following are some of the grounds for the suspension or cancellation of enrolment but are not limited to:

- a. Academic misconduct. The ACT may exclude a student from class studies on the grounds of academic misbehaviour by the student. Please refer to ACT's Academic Misconduct Policy.
- b. General misconduct. Please refer to your college's Student Code of Conduct Policy
- c. Unsatisfactory course progress. Please refer to ACT's Progression and Intervention Policy.
- d. Non-payment of fees by the due date. The ACT will inform the student of its intention and allow the student 20 working days in which to access the provider's complaints and appeals process. Please refer to the ACT's Written Agreement for Refund Policy.
- e. Non-commencement of studies - where the student does not commence studies in a program when they are due to commence and they have not notified ACT or the affiliated college in writing; or where the student requested deferment, but there were no compassionate or compelling reasons for granting a deferment.
- f. When a student who has not completed their program does not return to studies after a break and has not notified the affiliated college or the ACT of any reason. In this case, by not re-enrolling the student has 'inactively' advised that they will not be continuing their studies. The student will be notified by email of the intention to cancel enrolment. If no response is received within five (5)

working days ACT will notify Department of Education via PRISMS of the student's intention to cease studies by cancelling the student's CoE. This action automatically advises DIBP.

- g. ACT considers the student to be non-bona fide. Indicators of this include but are not limited to:
- A student who demonstrates erratic course progress as a result of their failure to maintain regular class attendance, such that attendance falls below 80%, shall have their enrolment cancelled and shall be reported to the Department of Education as non-bona fide
 - Students who have been counselled regarding their attendance and progression but their attendance and progression continues to be unsatisfactory without reasonable cause
 - Students who have not committed to the individual learning plan developed to support their study
 - Students who attend classes but refuse to be engaged or to participate in the learning. Examples of this include:
 - o not submitting assignments
 - o not attending class when assessments are scheduled
 - o refusing to participate or be involved in classroom or workshop activities.

Appealing ACT's decision to defer, suspend or cancel student enrolment

Should the student choose to access ACT's appeals process, the student's enrolment is maintained, and the Department of Education is not notified of a change to enrolment status until the **internal** complaints and appeals process is completed (and has supported ACT's intention to suspend or cancel the student's enrolment) unless extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student apply. ACT may choose to allow access to learning opportunities through the internal appeals process.

Extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student may include, but are not limited to the following. The student:

- Refuses to maintain approved care arrangements (only for students under 18 years of age);
- Is missing;
- Has medical concerns, severe depression or psychological issues which lead the provider to fear for the student's wellbeing;
- Has engaged or threatens to engage in behaviour that is reasonably believed to endanger the student or others; or
- Is at risk of committing a criminal offence

Any claim of extenuating circumstances will need to be supported by appreciate evidence.

External Appeal

If a student accesses the ACT's internal complaints and appeals process and is unsuccessful in the appeal against the ACT's intention to cancel the student's enrolment, the ACT will notify the Department of Education of the cancellation of the student's enrolment. The ACT is not required to await the outcome of any external appeals process.

Once the ACT notifies the Department of Education of the suspension or cancellation of a student's enrolment, the student has 28 days to leave Australia, to show DIBP a new CoE or to provide DIBP with evidence that he or she has accessed an external appeals process. Therefore, any student wishing to access an external appeals process must contact DIBP and provide evidence of having accessed an external appeals process within 28 days of the ACT notifying the Department of Education of the cancellation of enrolment. DIBP will then consider the student's individual circumstances and whether to cancel or maintain the student's visa.

Extension of Enrolment

The ACT and its affiliated colleges will only extend the duration of your study where it is clear that the student will not complete the course within the expected duration, as specified on your CoE, as the result of:

- a. compassionate or compelling circumstances (e.g. illness where a medical certificate states that the student were unable to attend classes or where the ACT was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit);
- b. the ACT implemented its intervention strategy if the student were at risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress; or
- c. an approved deferment or suspension of study has been granted.



GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION POLICY FOR OVERSEAS STUDENTS

The full policy is available and should be accessed through the ACT Website at <http://www.acttheology.edu.au/policies.php>.]

The College provides processes for handling grievances brought by prospective, enrolled and former overseas students regarding academic and non-academic matters.

General feedback and comment from students about administration, academic programs and services will not be treated by the ACT as a grievance unless action or a response is required under the policies or regulations of the ACT.

Whenever possible, grievances will be handled at the affiliated college level and within the College. However, should these internal processes not resolve the matter, provision is made for external independent grievance handling/dispute resolution.

Information contained in this policy statement must be given to students before an agreement is entered into or before any fees are paid, whichever occurs first, and within seven (7) days of starting an award course at an affiliated college of the ACT.

You may nominate an advocate to accompany, represent, and support them at any stage of the internal complaint and grievance processes, or external independent processes to resolve problems.

If you choose to access the appeal process, the ACT will maintain your enrolment while the process is ongoing. If the appeal results in a decision that supports your claim, the ACT will immediately implement that decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and will advise you of the outcome.

Appeals against Academic Decisions

Concerns about an academic decision concerning curriculum/assessment in a unit of study or the final grade awarded in a unit of study should initially discuss the issue informally with the Registrar at your college of enrolment. This should be done within twenty-five (25) working days of the release of results by the ACT. The Registrar should deal with the issue promptly, giving a full explanation to you of the reasons for the grade awarded.

If your concerns were not resolved by the Registrar, or because of a failure to follow procedures, you may then choose to approach the Academic Dean of the affiliated college. You may approach the Academic Dean on an informal basis, or else make the complaint formal by putting the grievance in writing, specifying the nature of the complaint and the grounds for your appeal. You should do either of these things within 15 working days of the outcome of discussions with the Registrar.

If you choose to approach the Academic Dean informally, this does not preclude later lodgement of the grievance formally in writing to the Academic Dean.

The Academic Dean should deal with informal complaint about the final grade for a unit promptly, giving a full explanation to you of the reasons for the academic decision.

While not limited to the following, you may normally appeal formally against the award of a grade only where:

1. the lecturer did not provide a unit outline as required; or
2. the assessment requirements as specified in the unit outline were varied in an unreasonable way; or
3. examiner's judgement was not objectively applied because of perceived prejudice against you; or
4. you are of the view that a clerical error has occurred in the computation of the grade; or
5. due regard has not been paid to the evidence of illness or misadventure if submitted by the specified date
6. you are of the view that you have been disadvantaged in some way due to the conduct of your final examination.

The Academic Dean must acknowledge receipt of a formal complaint in writing within five (5) working days of receipt.

The Academic Dean must try to resolve the complaint within 15 working days of receiving the complaint. The Academic Dean may discuss the matter with both yourself and the relevant lecturer in attendance. The Academic Dean may arrange for the assessment script(s) completed in the unit to be marked by another lecturer in your college of enrolment.

If your concerns cannot be resolved by the Academic Dean of an affiliated college, or because of failure to follow procedures, you may formally approach the Dean of the ACT by putting the complaint in writing and lodging it within 15 working days of receipt of the written response by the Academic Dean. Again the nature of the complaint and the grounds for appeal should be detailed.

The Dean must acknowledge receipt of the formal complaint in writing within five (5) working days of receipt.

The Dean must try to resolve the complaint within fifteen (15) working days of receiving the complaint.

Following investigation of the matter, the Dean will advise you in writing of his or her decision:

- (a) setting out the reasons;
- (b) if the complaint relates to the mark on an intra-semester assessment, advising that his/her decision is final;
- (c) on other academic matters, advising that if you do not agree with the decision, then you have the right of formal appeal to an independent external agency; and
- (d) giving you a copy of this policy, if you do not already have a copy.

If your concerns are not resolved by the Dean of the ACT, or if you believe the process has not been followed, you may approach the ACT's Director of Academic Services (for Academic Appeals Committee) by putting the complaint in writing and lodging it within 15 working days of receipt of the written response by the Dean of the ACT. Again the nature of the complaint and the grounds for appeal should be detailed.

The Academic Appeals Committee must acknowledge receipt of the formal complaint in writing within five (5) working days of receipt and must try to resolve the complaint within fifteen (15) working days of receiving the complaint.

Following investigation of the matter, the Academic Appeals Committee will advise you in writing of his or her decision:

- (a) setting out the reasons;
- (b) advising that if you do not agree with the decision, then you have the right of formal appeal to an independent external agency; and
- (c) giving you a copy of this policy, if you do not already have a copy.

Appeals Regarding non-Academic/Administrative and Other Issues

Non-academic/administrative issues are not limited to, but include, matters related to fees, withdrawals, etc., and other issues students may consider are interfering with the progress of their studies.

In the first instance, if you are concerned about a non-academic decision made or action taken by your affiliated college you should discuss your grievance with the Overseas Liaison Officer/Registrar at your college of enrolment. The Overseas Liaison Officer/Registrar will promptly notify you of any action taken or any decision made by them in relation to the grievance.

If, following the notification from the Overseas Liaison Officer/Registrar, your grievance is not resolved to your satisfaction, you should seek advice from the Overseas Liaison Officer/Registrar who will advise you to whom you may next address your grievance. If the matter relates to the affiliated college, you may address the Principal; if the matter relates to ACT policy or regulations, you may address the ACT Director of Academic Services. The Overseas Liaison Officer/Registrar will give you a copy of this policy.

If your concerns relate to ACT policy or regulations and have not been resolved by the Overseas Liaison Officer/Registrar of the affiliated college, or because of a failure to follow procedures, you may then choose to formally approach the Director of Academic Services of the ACT. You should put the complaint in writing to the ACT Director of Academic Services within 15 working days of the outcome of discussions with the Overseas Liaison Officer/Registrar, specifying the nature of the complaint and the grounds for your appeal.

The ACT Director of Academic Services must acknowledge receipt of a formal complaint in writing within five (5) working days of receipt.

The ACT Director of Academic Services must try to resolve the complaint within 15 working days of receiving the complaint.

Following investigation of the matter, the ACT Director of Academic Services will advise you in writing of his or her decision:

- (a) setting out the reasons;
- (b) advising that if you do not agree with the decision, then you have the right of formal appeal to the Dean of the ACT; and
- (c) giving you a copy of this policy, if you do not already have a copy.

If your concerns cannot be resolved by the Director of Academic Services, or because of failure to follow procedures, you may formally approach the Dean of the ACT by putting the complaint in writing and lodging it within 15 working days of receipt of the written response by the ACT Director of Academic Services. Again the nature of the complaint and the grounds for appeal should be detailed.

The Dean must acknowledge receipt of the formal complaint in writing within five (5) working days of receipt. The Dean must try to resolve the complaint within fifteen (15) working days of receiving the complaint.

Following investigation of the matter, the Dean will advise you in writing of his or her decision:

- (a) setting out the reasons;
- (b) advising that if you do not agree with the decision, then you have the right of formal appeal to an independent external agency; and
- (c) giving you a copy of this policy, if you do not already have a copy.

External Dispute Resolution

Students who remain dissatisfied with the outcome of any appeal, except those related to a mark or grade, can make a final appeal free of charge to the Committee of the Council of Private Higher Education Incorporated (COPHE), c/- the Executive Officer, Suite 59, 47 Neridah Street, Chatswood NSW 2167 (02 8021 0841). Such appeals should be in writing. The staff at affiliated colleges and the ACT are also able to make representation to the COPHE Committee regarding the matter. You can include a nominee in this process if you so choose. Decisions of the COPHE Committee shall be final and binding on all parties.

External Formal Concern

If you are concerned about the College's actions on any matter at any time, you may raise concerns with respect to the ACT's registration as an education and course provider to overseas students with the Overseas Students Ombudsman:

Overseas Students Ombudsman
GPO Box 442
Canberra ACT 2601
Ph: (02) 6276 0111; Fax: (02) 6276 0123; Web: www.oso.gov.au

Implications of withdrawing from or not accessing the complaints and appeals process

Where the ACT has assessed the student as not complying with their student visa conditions, either through unsatisfactory attendance or unsatisfactory course progress, or for disciplinary reasons, the ACT will notify the student in writing of its intention to report the student to the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP). The written notice will inform the student that he or she is able to access the ACT's Grievance Resolution Policy for Overseas Students and that the student has twenty (20) working days in which to do so.

Where a student has chosen not to access the complaints and appeals process outlined in this policy within the twenty (20) working day period, withdraws from the process, or the process is completed and results in a decision supporting the ACT, the ACT will notify the Secretary of the Department of Education, Employment and Training through PRISMS as soon as practicable.



FEES

The fees are updated every year. The updated fees are available from the ACT website: http://www.actheology.edu.au/students_tuitionfees.php



REFUND POLICY

The Australian College of Theology (ACT, the College) has developed this policy in accordance with Section 28(1) of the ESOS Act 2000 and the National Code 2007.

This policy, and the availability of complaints and appeals processes, does not remove the right of the student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws (National Code, Standard 3.2.d). Moreover, the dispute resolution procedures of the ACT do not circumscribe the student's right to pursue other legal remedies, such as action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

A copy of this policy must be given to all intending and enrolling overseas students before any course fees are paid. This policy is available on the ACT website (www.acttheology.edu.au).

Affiliated colleges may levy a non-refundable Application Fee.

Tuition fees for ACT courses are subject to annual review and the annual tuition fee for a calendar year of study may change from 1 January each year. Thus, tuition fees for units studied will be at the rate applicable at the time of study.

Overseas students are required to pay their tuition fees up-front in full for the first half-year of full-time study (16cps), unless other arrangements have been agreed to in writing by the Registrar of the affiliated college at which the student proposes to enrol. The amount of the fees due at their enrolling college will take account of any subsidy provided by the college.

In the event that the information supplied by an applicant which was the basis for an offer of admission to a course is found to have been incorrect or insufficient for the offered course or to gain admission to another College course, the College shall withdraw the offer and reserves the right to withhold 10% of the tuition fees paid for the first half-year (or \$1000 whichever is the lesser amount) and to refund the balance.

Overseas students are obliged to make up-front payments of tuition and other fees normally no later than the first day in each study period of teaching of units in their course. Tuition fees will be charged according to the unit load for the next study period.

While overseas students can now be allowed to enrol in less than a full-time unit load each study period, they are required to complete the enrolled course within the time frame as stated on the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) document. This means that if overseas students elect to take less than a full-time load in any study period, they need to keep in mind how they will organize their unit load in future study periods in order to complete the course on time.

Refunds if the student defaults

A student may withdraw from a course any time after acceptance and from a unit at any time during the course of study. However, students and colleges need to be aware of the consequences of such an action in relation to the National Code 2007.

After enrolment, all students will be subject to the provisions of the Variation of Enrolment policy as it relates to withdrawing from units and courses and the consequences according to the time in a study period that the action occurs. The Variation of Enrolment policy is available on the College's website: www.acttheology.edu.au. A summary of the implications of the policy as relating to overseas students withdrawing from units and courses is available at appendix A-C in this policy.

A student will be deemed to be defaulted as per Section 47 of the ESOS Act 2000 where the following occurs:

- a. The student does not start the course on the agreed starting day (and has not previously withdrawn)
- b. The student withdraws from the course (either before or after the agreed starting date)
- c. The registered provider of the course refuses to provide, or continue providing the course to the student because of one of the following events:
 - The student failed to pay an amount he or she was liable to pay, directly or indirectly, in order to undertake the course
 - The student breached a condition of his or her student visa;
 - Misbehavior of the student

The provider will notify, in writing the Secretary and the TPS Director of the default within 5 business days of the default occurring.

Refund Policy on the following student defaults:

A. When the student does not start the course on the agreed starting day (and has not previously withdrawn)

If a student does not start the course on the agreed starting day (and has not previously withdrawn), the student will be deemed to have defaulted on their course. Any pre-paid tuition fees are to be refunded, but any applicable application fees paid by the student will not be refunded.

B. The student withdraws from the course (either before or after the agreed starting date)

After enrolment, all students will be subject to the provisions of the Variation of Enrolment policy as it relates to withdrawing from units and courses and the consequences according to the time in a study period that the action occurs. The Variation of Enrolment policy is available on the College's website: www.actheology.edu.au. A summary of the implications of the policy as relating to overseas students withdrawing from units and courses is available at appendix A-C in this policy.

C. When the registered provider of the course refuses to provide, or continue providing the course to the student because of one of the following events:

- The student failed to pay an amount he or she was liable to pay, directly or indirectly, in order to undertake the course
- The student breached a condition of his or her student visa
- Misbehavior of the student

If the refusal of a course occurred on or before the census date of a unit, the provider will refund unused tuition fees for that unit. If the refusal of a course occurred after the census date of a unit, no refund of tuition fees is applicable for that unit. Units which have not yet begun will be refunded in full if prepaid.

Refunds if the provider defaults

Refunds if the registered provider defaults cannot be covered by a written agreement between the provider and the student. Such situations are covered by the provisions of the Tuition Protection Service. For more information about the Tuition Protection Service, please visit <https://tps.gov.au>.

Where the provider defaults:

a. If either of the following occurs:

- (i) The provider fails to start to provide the course to the student on the agreed starting day
- (ii) The course ceases to be provided to the student at any time after it starts but before it is completes

b. If the student has not withdrawn before the default day.

The provider will notify, in writing, the Secretary and the TPS Director of the default between 3 business days of the default occurring. The provider will also notify the student, in writing, of the default.

The provider will discharge the following obligation within 14 days after the default day:

1. Provide a refund of the unspent tuition fees to all affected students calculated in accordance with the law.
2. Alternatively, arrange for the student to be offered a place in an alternative course at the provider's expense (student will be required to accept the offer in writing prior to implementation).

Other information concerning the refund of tuition fees

When the student is granted Australian permanent residency on or prior to the census date for a teaching period and provides evidence of their enrolment at the College as a domestic student, refund of pre-paid fees minus the fee applicable to domestic students for the same course and units is applicable.

The Registrar of the affiliated college at which a student is enrolled must pay the refund or respond to the request for a refund within four (4) weeks of receipt of the written claim from a student. Refunds will normally be made in the same currency as the fees were originally paid and will be made in the student's home country except in documented special circumstances.

As it is the student only who enters into the written agreement with the affiliated college, and no third party is normally involved, the refund will normally be paid to the student. If the student wishes the refund to be paid to someone else (eg. in the event that the tuition fees were paid by another person), the student must provide a letter of authority signed by the student and the receiving party, including account details of the receiving party, enabling the college to pay the other party. The letter should be attached to the request for refund.

In circumstances where a student is approved to study at another institution in Australia, any refund must be paid directly to the new institution accepting the student. Refunds in the form of transfer of fees to another institution will be made subject to the student presenting evidence of an offer of a place to study in that institution.

A notice of withdrawal due to special circumstances may be accepted as grounds for a total refund of fees, subject to the provision of acceptable documentary evidence in support of the application for a refund. Special circumstances include, but are not limited to::

- inability to obtain a student visa
- illness or disability
- failure to meet English language requirements for admission
- death of the student or a close family member (parent, sibling, spouse or child)
- political, civil or natural event which prevents full payment of fees.

30 June 2016
Simon Davies
Director of Academic Services

Appendix A – Summary of the Variation of Enrolment Policy for the purposes of overseas student withdrawals – Definitions

The following definitions are intended to guide students understand Appendix B and C.

Administrative Date – the date in the period of presentation of a unit after which payment of the Variation of Enrolment Fee is required up until the Census Date for addition or substitution of a unit for ACT credit or for withdrawing from the unit.

For semester-length units, the Administrative Date is 5pm (college local time) on the last day (normally Friday) of the second teaching week of semester. For intensive units, the Administrative Date is 5pm (college local time) on the second day of classes in the unit.

Census Date – the date against which enrolled load in a unit is tallied. For semester-length units, the Census Date is normally 31 March or 31 August. For units taught in intensive mode, the Census Date must be no less than 20% of the period from commencement of the unit to the final date for completion of assessment tasks. Requests to be actioned against a Census Date must be lodged by 5pm (college local time) on that date. [Census Dates do not apply to ThA or private ThL students.] The Variation of Enrolment fee shall not apply after the census date.

Withdrawal Date – the date after the Census Date of a unit and before which a student must withdraw from the unit so as not to incur academic penalty. For semester-length units, the Withdrawal Date shall normally be the Friday at the end of the second full teaching week after the Census Date. For intensive units, the Withdrawal Date is approximately 60% of the period from commencement of the unit to the final date for completion of assessment tasks. Requests to be actioned against the Withdrawal Date must be lodged by 5pm (college local time) on that date.

Variation of Enrolment Fee – Annually, usually in August for the next year, a Fee per credit point shall be set by the Dean in relation to withdrawing from unit after Administrative Date and before Census Date. See http://www.actheology.edu.au/students_tuitionfees.php for the most up to date information.

Appendix B – Summary Table for Semester-length Units, adapted from the Variation of Enrolment Policy for the purposes of overseas student withdrawals

The following table has been adapted from the Variation of Enrolment Policy for an overseas student withdrawing from a course or units. All enrolled students are subject to this policy.

<i>Withdrawing from Semester-length Units – Overseas students (assumes student has completed unit enrolment for ACT credit by the end of Week 2 of semester)</i>
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Semester Week	Day	Action Date	Withdraw from unit(s)
1	first day	Unit Start	No Variation of Enrolment Fee applies Unit deleted from record
2	last day - 5pm (college local time)	Administrative Date	No academic penalty No FEE-HELP liability Full refund of any up-front payments
3	after Administrative Date up to		Variation of Enrolment Fee applies (201 fee is up to \$340/unit) No academic penalty (unit graded AW) Full refund of any up-front payments
	31 Mar or 31 Aug 5pm (college local time)	Census Date	
	after Census Date up to		No Variation of Enrolment Fee applies No academic penalty (unit graded W) No refund of any up-front payments*
Friday at end of second full teaching week after Census date	last day 5pm (college local time)	Withdrawal Date	
	after Withdrawal Date		No Variation of Enrolment Fee applies Academic penalty (unit graded FW) No refund of any up-front payments*

*If a student considers "special circumstances" prevailed at the time of withdrawal from the unit, the student may request refunding of any up-front payment(s) made in relation to the unit.

Appendix C – Summary Table for Units taught in intensive mode, adapted from the Variation of Enrolment Policy for the purposes of overseas student withdrawals

The following table has been adapted from the Variation of Enrolment Policy for an overseas student withdrawing from a course or units. All enrolled students are subject to this policy.

Withdrawing from units presented in Intensive mode – Overseas students (assumes student has completed unit enrolment for ACT credit by the end of Day 2 of unit presentation)			
Day	Time	Action Date	Withdraw from unit(s)
Presentation Day 1		Unit Start	No Variation of Enrolment Fee applies Unit deleted from record
Presentation Day 2	5pm (college local time)	Administrative Date	No academic penalty Full refund of any up-front payments
	after Administrative Date up to		Variation of Enrolment Fee applies (2013 fee is up to \$340/unit) No academic penalty (unit graded AW) Full refund of any up-front payments
day more than 20% of the time into the unit (including assessment period)	5pm (college local time)	Census Date	
	after Census Date up to		No Variation of Enrolment Fee applies No academic penalty (unit graded W) No refund of any up-front payments*
approx. 60% of the time into the unit (including assessment period)	5pm (college local time)	Withdrawal Date	
	after Withdrawal Date		No Variation of Enrolment Fee applies Academic penalty (unit graded FW) No refund of any up-front payments*

*If a student considers "special circumstances" prevailed at the time of withdrawal from the unit, the student may request refunding of any up-front payment(s) made in relation to the unit.

CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

Detailed Critical Incident Policy can be accessed online at <http://www.actheology.edu.au/policies.php>

A critical incident is as an event which results in or has the potential to cause serious harm to persons or property often accompanied by trauma affecting victims and participants. A threshold for the adjective critical could be where expert medical attention or professional counselling is required or the cost of structural repair is substantial. The National Code defines critical incident as a 'traumatic event or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury.

A critical incident may vary in terms of the potential scale of the emergency and level of media interest. Those of the college population who perceive the potential for or witness a critical incident that may or does impact a student are also covered by this policy. The critical incident may occur on or off a college campus to a student who is studying by on-campus or off-campus/distance mode.

Principles

(A) Benefits of this policy and procedures

A1. Procedures should ...

- (a) reduce the likelihood of critical incidents,
- (b) enable incidents to be managed efficiently and compassionately
- (c) prevent further harm and promote recovery
- (d) facilitate continuous improvement
- (e) reduce the risk of independent action

(B) Possible Critical Incidents

B1. Critical Incidents may include but are not limited to the following, whether they occur on-campus or off-campus, during or after normal hours of college activity:

- Acts of violence or threatening behaviour
- Natural hazards or man-made disasters or potential disasters
- Site invasion that leads to harm whether by intent or not
- Accident onsite or offsite
- Acts of self-harm or social irresponsibility
- Structural failure of building or equipment
- Riot or affray
- Onset of physical or mental illness
- Witnessing a critical incident affecting third parties including accident, assault, injury, death
- Person or persons missing and presumed to be at substantial risk
- Arrest
- Acts or omissions of staff, students and/or contractors
- Being the victim of a crime – robbery, assault

(C) Overseas students

C1. Overseas students should be offered special consideration because of less familiarity with local circumstances and institutions and the absence of a personal support network.

(D) Roles of ACT colleges

D1. This policy recommends colleges define responsible persons to supervise the management of critical incidents and ensure the welfare of students and staff.

D2. In order to comply with the National Code 2007, the ACT is obliged to require colleges to keep records of critical incidents including but not limited to the nature of the incident, the way in which it was managed and the follow up actions that took place to complete the recovery.

D3. Since the threshold for defining a critical incident is hard to set and the Code does not appear to have been formulated with consortia in mind, efficiency in reporting would suggest the following practice be adopted: colleges must put in place procedures whereby they can supply on request the information specified in the National Code and they must inform the ACT promptly of any particularly serious incidents.

Policy Content

(A) Disclaimer

A1. This document provides guidance on procedures to adopt in handling critical incidents but does not restrict the scope or power of college executives to adapt or modify them as seems appropriate. Advice from specialist organisations is readily available on emergency management and risk management and should be consulted. Moreover, government regulations specify requirements and procedures relating to a variety of risks, e.g. fire, flood, etc., which are likely to be incorporated in risk management plans.

(B) Roles and responsibilities in colleges

B1. The college should incorporate the critical incident policy within its risk management framework.

B2. The college should bring their critical incident policy and procedures to the attention of staff and students at the time of their orientation or induction to the college.

B3. The college should include in the procedures for dealing with critical incidents the following:

- (a) Mechanisms to reduce the likelihood of occurrence of a critical incident, i.e. basically risk management plans.
- (b) Designate the person with responsibility for oversight and authority of a critical incident. Such person would usually be the CEO (Principal) but the supervisory responsibility may be delegated to a person with known capability. The person designated should be self-controlled, able to think clearly and respond decisively and keep the CEO informed. The Principal may establish roles for particular staff, form any teams that seem appropriate and delegate responsibilities to personnel with appropriate expertise. Colleges may find it helpful to establish a team of responsible people to strengthen the response capability.
- (c) Reporting and communication systems that provide information flow up and down the line of command, and include assembly points made known to on-campus personnel. It is important to avoid confusion and ensure the coordination of decisions and actions in the event of an incident.
- (d) Mechanisms that ensure personnel who first identify an incident know who to report to and are aware that they should avoid actions that compound risk. This may include training programs.
- (e) Personnel with competencies likely to assist with incident response, e.g. those with first aid qualifications, technical skills, etc.
- (f) Contacts for expert advice: medical, fire, SES, police, counselling
- (g) An aide to the person in charge can be helpful in recording responses and checking against established procedures, and passing such records to the Registrar. The Registrar should normally be responsible for ensuring a report is compiled and records maintained.
- (h) Mechanisms to identify follow up procedures for affected parties to an incident in a way that brings finality.
- (i) Scheduling of debriefing and formulation of recommendations arising from the incident review

Staff and students are responsible for ...

- (a) following the critical incident procedures published by their college
- (b) knowing to whom they report an incident or the potential for an incident
- (c) not placing themselves or others at risk of injury or other trauma
- (d) supporting those with overall responsibility for oversight of the process
- (e) availing themselves of the support mechanisms in the event of exposure to a critical incident

(C) Responsibility of the ACT Office

C1. The ACT office and/or Academic Board is responsible for determining any amendments that may be appropriate for a student's study and assessment program, and will act on any recommendations made by the college.

C2. The ACT office or Academic Board may also act in regard to any staff matter for which the ACT has responsibility and will act on any recommendation by the college.

Procedures

1. Introduction

(A) Student File Essentials

For the purposes of managing incidents student files should normally contain:

- Coloured Photograph
- For overseas students a copy of the title and Australian visa pages of their Passport
- Student's religion
- Emergency contact telephone numbers, with next of kin details, agent or sponsor (as applicable)
- Any other significant personal details – student ID, course details, medical conditions, allergy information, etc.
- Medical insurance status

2. Procedures

(A) Preamble

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The following procedures are indicative, provide guidelines and should be adapted to college Circumstances.

- (B) Action by witness or directly affected party
- B1. A person who witnesses an incident or is the first contacted shall ...
- (a) contact the Principal or responsible person
 - (b) act as directed by the responsible person
 - (c) if directed or in the absence of obtaining immediate access to the responsible person, contact emergency services as soon as it is safe to do so
 - (d) take immediate action to minimise the risk of further injury or damage
 - (e) act to protect the safety and welfare of witnesses
 - (f) assess the situation carefully and gather information
- (C) Action by responsible person (i.e. Principal or designated person)
- C1 The responsible person shall ...
- (a) maintain oversight of the incident
 - (b) arrange for expert help as required
 - (c) establish communication systems to keep affected parties informed, including family and friends during the incident and throughout the follow-up period
 - (d) direct others to assist in the management of the incident
 - (e) ensure appropriate effective support is provided to affected parties
 - (f) protect the site or anything associated with the incident in case an the matter is investigated by the Police or other government agency
 - (g) set up a recovery room with appropriate furniture and resources if appropriate
 - (h) gather relevant information about the incident and interview affected parties
 - (i) assist staff/students to contact their family/close friend(s) to advise them of the situation and provide other assistance as necessary and appropriate
 - (j) assist members of the public to contact their family/close friend(s), and assist them as appropriate, perhaps by arranging transport for them
 - (k) inform the Principal and the Registrar and Dean of Students of the situation
 - (l) if the incident has impacted an overseas student, inform the Overseas Student Contact Officer for the campus
 - (m) debrief those who worked on the incident
 - (n) establish a means of keeping affected parties informed without compromising legal, insurance or reputational liability.
 - (o) prepare or arrange for the preparation of a Critical Incident Report. The Registrar would normally be responsible for seeing that this was completed satisfactorily and kept on file.
 - (p) Assess implications arising for risk mitigation and arrange for their implementation
- (D) Action by the Registrar or person designated by Registrar
- D1. The Registrar, or designated responsible person, shall
- (a) assist in the documenting of the incident and preparing the incident report
 - (a) assess the implications for an affected student's study and assessment program
 - (b) under the direction of the responsible person manage the follow up procedures
 - (c) contact the ACT Dean or his delegate, advising of matters relevant to ACT responsibilities and submitting the Incident Report when completed as appropriate
 - (d) arrange for any necessary notification to relevant educational and government bodies, e.g. DIBP, Consulate/Embassy, etc
 - (e) monitor or assist the Principal in monitoring investigations by any external agencies
 - (f) maintain a complete record of critical incidents
- (E) Action by the Principal if not the responsible person
- E1. If the Principal is not the responsible person, the Principal shall ...
- (a) Contact the ACT Dean, as appropriate, and confirm his knowledge of the incident and action being taken or completed
 - (b) receive the Critical Incident Report
 - (c) consider any recommendations
 - (d) manage relations



WORKING IN AUSTRALIA

Working while studying

If you were granted a Student visa on or after 26 April 2008, you and your dependent family members will already have permission to work included with your visa.

If you were granted a Student visa before 26 April 2008 and have not yet applied for permission to work, you and your dependent family members may only apply for Permission to Work after you have started your course in Australia.

Overseas students are advised to consult the Work Conditions for Student Visa Holders, published by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection at the following link:
<https://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Stud/More/Visa-conditions/visa-conditions-students>



OBLIGATIONS OF THE ACT AND ITS AFFILIATED COLLEGES AS PER THE NATIONAL CODE

- (a) The following information should be provided, either in print or by referral to an electronic copy, by affiliated colleges approved to enrol overseas students to each overseas student prior to acceptance for enrolment in an ACT approved course:
- the requirements for acceptance into a course, including the minimum level of English language proficiency, educational qualifications or work experience required and whether course credit may be applicable
 - advice that should an applicant wish to seek credit based on previous study or RPL towards the course for which they are applying, the application for credit needs to be lodged at the same time as the application for admission and, if credit is granted and reduces the period of study, this will be reflected in the offer letter (as this is the contract with the student) and will be indicated either on the eCoE issued for that student to commence the course, or reported on PRISMS. Such students are reminded that they must still maintain a full time study load and that credit can affect their visa status.
 - a general description of the content and duration of the course
 - the qualification gained on completion
 - the teaching methods used and modes of study available
 - the assessment methods used in the course
 - a general description of the facilities, equipment, and learning and library resources available to students on their proposed campus of study
 - an accurate description of the local environment in which the affiliated college operates including location of the campus and indicative costs of living and accommodation
 - details of any arrangements with other providers for recognition of the course or completed components of the course
 - an itemised list of all fees payable to the provider including advice on the potential for fees to change during the student's course and the current Fee and Refund policy
 - a description of the ESOS framework made available electronically by the Department of Education
 - a copy of the Dispute Resolution Policy for Overseas Students
 - information about the grounds on which the student enrolment may be deferred, suspended or cancelled.
 - relevant information on living in Australia, including:
 - indicative costs of living
 - accommodation options, and
 - where relevant, schooling obligations and options for school-aged dependants of intending students, including that school fees may be incurred.

[All Policies mentioned above may be accessed on the ACT website –www.actheology.edu.au]

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- (b) The registered provider must enter into a written agreement with the student, signed or otherwise accepted by that student (or the student's parent or legal guardian if the student is under 18 years of age), concurrently with or prior to accepting course money from the student. The agreement must:
- (c) The affiliated college shall assist students to adjust to study and life in Australia, including through the provision of an age and culturally appropriate orientation programme that includes information about:
- student support services available to students in the transition to life and study in a new environment
 - legal services
 - emergency and health services
 - facilities and resources
 - complaints and appeals processes, and
 - any student visa condition relating to course progress and/or attendance as appropriate.
- (c) The affiliated college shall provide the opportunity for students to participate in services or provide access to services designed to assist students in meeting course requirements and maintaining their attendance.
- (d) The affiliated college shall provide the opportunity for students to access welfare-related support services to assist with issues that may arise during their study, including course progress and attendance requirements and accommodation issues. These services shall be provided at no additional cost to the student. If the affiliated college refers the student to external support services, there shall be no charge for the referral.
- (e) The affiliated college shall designate a member of staff or members of staff to be the official point of contact for students. The student contact officer or officers must have access to up-to-date details of the support services provided by the affiliated college.
- (f) While not obliged to do so under the *National Code 2007*, the affiliated college shall monitor the attendance records every fortnight for non-attendance. Procedures are in place for contacting and counselling a student if the student has been absent for more than five consecutive days without approval, or is not consistently attending their course.
- (g) The affiliated college shall monitor the progress of each student to ensure that at all times the student is in a position to complete the course within the expected duration as specified in the student's CoE. In each study period, the student shall be required to study at least one unit that is not by distance or online learning.
- (h) The ACT shall monitor the progress of students in their course at the end of each study period and intervene in accordance with the Progression and Intervention policy which shall be provided to students by their college of enrolment.
- (i) The ACT will contact the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) if any overseas student is breaching the terms of their visa relating to academic performance (see [i] above).
- (j) The ACT will advise the designated authorities in writing of any prospective changes to the ownership of the ACT as soon as practicable prior to the change taking effect, and any prospective or actual change to the affiliated colleges of the ACT as soon as practicable prior to the change taking effect or within 10 working days of the change taking effect where the change cannot be determined until it takes effect. Changes in such agents will require the signing of the ACT's "Fit and Proper Person" declaration.



RESPONSIBILITIES OF OVERSEAS STUDENTS ON A STUDENT VISA:

- (a) An overseas student will normally be enrolled in full-time only. Although the new National Code no longer requires this for each study period, students are required to complete the enrolled course within the time frame as stated on the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) document. This means that if overseas students elect to take less than a full-time load in any study period, they need to keep in mind how they will organize their unit load in future study periods in order to complete the course on time. Full-time is defined as normally not less than 16 cps per semester, or 32 cps per year. No more than 25 percent of the student's total course may be undertaken by distance and/or online learning.

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- (b) Overseas students must be aware that any school-aged dependants accompanying them to Australia will be required to pay full fees if they are enrolled in either a government or non-government school.
- (c) Overseas students are not allowed to defer commencement of their studies, or suspend their studies after commencement, except on the grounds of illness, evidenced by a doctor's certificate, or other exceptional compassionate circumstances beyond the control of the student, for example, bereavement. If a student defers or suspends their studies on any other grounds, the ACT must report the student as not complying with visa conditions.
- (d) Overseas students must maintain satisfactory course progress for each study period as required by your education provider.
- (e) Overseas students must consistently attend classes in their course and seek approval for any absence expected to be longer than five consecutive days, unless prevented by illness or other exceptional compassionate circumstances beyond the control of the student.
- (f) Where an overseas student is required to take extra units to complete a course of study, and the remaining units do not constitute a full-time load, the student is not required to be enrolled in full-time study by the ACT. This may apply to students who are required to repeat a unit of study. Students are not allowed to repeat any unit more than once.
- (g) Overseas students have a duty to advise the ACT through their college of enrollment of any change in their contact details (i.e. Australian residential address and telephone number). If students do not keep their contact details up to date and the ACT has to send a notice informing that student of their failure to satisfy course requirements or to progress satisfactorily, this may result in automatic student visa cancellation without the knowledge of the student. Such cancellation may not be revoked if it has occurred where the student has failed to keep the ACT informed of their address.
- (h) Overseas students are responsible for arranging health insurance, and for maintaining the currency of that insurance each year. Details of the insurance policy should be provided to the sponsoring college at the time of application.
- (i) Before arranging a visa, overseas students must ensure that they have the financial resources available to cover their tuition and other related study costs such as accommodation, health insurance, living expenses, childcare, etc.



WHO TO SEE FOR WHAT

Please note, your college may use titles other than those listed below. It will be your responsibility to make sure you know the names of the staff members at your college that fit with the titles described here.

Academic

- Lecturers Questions about content of units, teaching procedures, assessment.
- Course Coordinator..... Questions about the program as a whole, academic regulations, difficulties with study, decisions to defer from study (Inform Overseas Education Office)
- Academic Skills Adviser Help with reading, writing, note taking, preparation for exams & assignments

Administrative

- Overseas Student Adviser Visa problems, financial problems, enrolment and short term accommodation
- Overseas Student Adviser Health care/ insurance problems, academic progression, accommodation, understanding of how to utilise institution processes effectively.
- Student Administration..... Timetable, registration in subject units, change of address.

Personal

- Student Counsellor..... Problems with relationships, homesickness, gambling, depression, relationship issues.

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Campus Minister..... Spiritual / religious issues, personal problems.
Equity & Equal Opportunity Office Sexual harassment, discrimination issues.
Disability Adviser Examination/study adjustments.
Accommodation Office Accommodation issues



WHERE TO LOOK FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

For detailed information on accommodation resources, the local environment of the campuses, and other details of campus life, you should refer to the web pages of those affiliated colleges endorsed to enrol overseas students. These sites can be accessed to the right of the ACT's home page at www.actheology.edu.au . Each endorsed affiliated college also makes this information available in hard copy.

