



STUDENT HANDBOOK

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About the Student Handbook

This Student Handbook is your guide to VIA Education. In this guide, you will find information on how VIA Education works, where students should go, and who they should see to resolve problems. This guide also contains policies and procedures and relevant legislative and regulatory requirements so that you understand how VIA Education operates.

Disclaimer

VIA Education attempts to ensure that the information provided within this guide is accurate and up to date, but sections may be amended without notice. Persons intending to act on any information contained herein should first check with VIA Education to ascertain whether any updated information is available in respect of the relevant material. VIA Education, its agents and employees will not be liable for any loss or damage arising directly or indirectly from the possession, publication or use of reliance on information obtained from distributed information. It is provided in good faith without express or implied warranty.

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WELCOME

Welcome to VIA Education where new and exciting experiences and adventures await you. Our dedicated and experienced staff and trainers provide every student with equal and the best educational opportunity possible. We are committed to delivering high-quality learning experience to prepare you for your future career.

VIA Education is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), registered by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) under the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* (NVETR Act) and *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* (RTO No: 45076). VIA Education is also registered on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions & Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) (CRICOS Provider No: 03562G).

Please take few moments to read through the information contained within this handbook to familiarise yourself with VIA Education's policies and procedures.

If at any time you have questions or need our support, please do not hesitate to speak to any of our friendly staff.



VIA EDUCATION

CONTACTING VIA EDUCATION

Our Location

Level 5, 565 George St
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Reception Hours (during study terms)

Monday - Friday:	9:00am - 5:30pm
Saturdays:	closed
Sundays:	closed

Note: Due to COVID-19 pandemic, access to our campus is restricted. Please call us before coming to campus.

Reception Hours (during term breaks)

Monday - Friday:	9:00am - 5:30pm
Saturdays and Sundays:	closed

Contacting Us

Telephone:	(02) 9261 5616
Out of hour emergency contact:	0410 671 866
Email:	info@via.edu.au
Website:	www.via.edu.au

ABOUT VIA EDUCATION

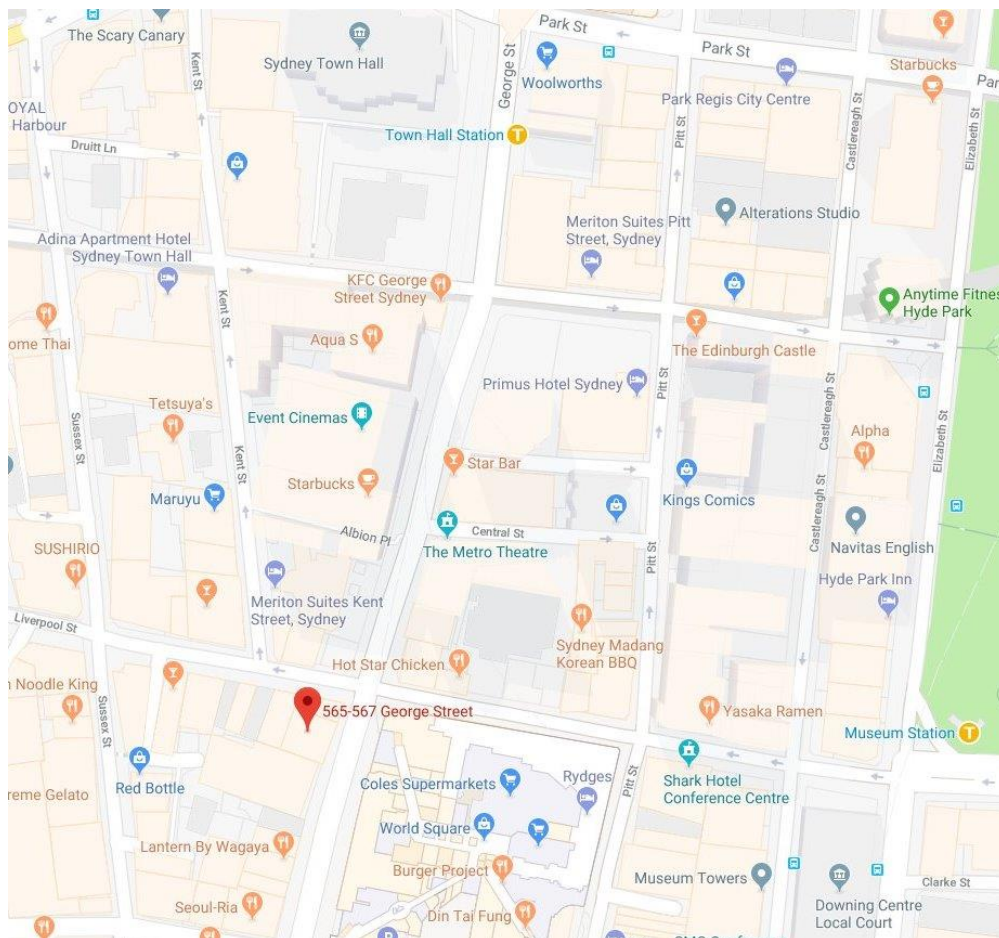
VIA Education welcomes students from across the world seeking a rewarding educational experience and a taste of the Australian lifestyle.

Our focus is on delivering a quality educational experience while preparing our clients for a rewarding career.

We engage with industry to ensure our course content is up to date and meets the needs of evolving workplaces. Our dedicated trainers and assessors provide you with up-to-date knowledge and skills, so you can achieve success both during and after completing your studies.

Our Location

VIA Education is in the heart of the thriving city of Sydney. We are situated between two major train stations — Central and Town Hall stations — and directly opposite Sydney's famous World Square retail and commercial complex. We are a short walk to Darling Harbour and surrounded by food outlets and entertainment options.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Who to speak to if you need assistance?

Studying in a new location, and particularly in a new country, can be challenging. We understand this as many of our staff have been through the same experience. If you have a problem, or you just feel like you need someone to talk to, let us know.

At any time if you have a problem or require support please see our reception desk as the first point of contact so that we can find the best person to help you.

Who I can talk to?	You can contact them:
Trainers and Assessors	If you have assessment related enquiries To get feedback on assessment activities To get information on assessment and training schedules To know about training and assessment outcomes If you have attendance related queries
Student Services Team	To notify your change of address If you need to lodge complaint or appeal If you have health cover (OSHC) enquiries Require first aid If you have qualification issuance enquiries For assessment re-attempts To apply for leave For payments and payment related enquiries
Training Manager / The VIA Education Management	If you have course enquiries If you have timetable enquiries For re-enrolments For resource related enquiries For academic support

Your student ID card

Your student ID card will be issued in the first week of your course. Always keep it with you.

Discounts available to students

Many local businesses offer discounts to students. You will need to provide your identification card to take advantage of these.

Replacing a lost or damaged card

Please ensure you take care of your Student ID card. Should you require a replacement card please see Student Services. A fee of \$10 applies to replace a card.

Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

If you are in Australia on a Student Visa, you must have health cover for the entire duration of your visa. If your health cover expires during your time in Australia, it is important you renew it immediately.

If you have requested VIA Education to arrange your cover at the time of your enrolment, our Student Services staff will send you a message when your membership ID card is ready for collection. Please allow up to two weeks after you commence your course.

Ensure you keep your OSHC card with you in case you need medical services. If you are absent from class because of serious illness, please ask your doctor for a Medical Certificate and provide this to Student Services to take a copy for your file. Please note that your attendance will still be affected by absences due to illness unless you are on a period of approved medical leave.

Critical Incidents

VIA Education recognises the duty of care owed to its students and understands that planning for the management of a critical incident is essential. Students must report all incidents and hazards to Student Services as soon as possible.

On-Campus Incidents

If the incident is on campus, staff, students or visitors involved or witnessing a critical incident should immediately contact the emergency services - fire, police or ambulance. If the matter is WHS related, Student Services team should also be contacted immediately regarding the incident.

Off-Campus Incidents

If the critical incident occurs outside the campus premises, any student or staff involved in the incident must contact the Student Services Manager or Managing Director and report the issue immediately. The contact numbers for VIA Education are:

Phone: 02 9261 5616 during business hours

Mobile: 0410 671 866 out of business hours.

Evacuation Drills

Regular evacuation drills are held throughout the year in case of emergency. Please ensure you familiarise yourself with floor plans and emergency exit locations.

If the building's alarm sounds, exit via the closest fire escapes. Never use the lift in times of emergency.

Please see the emergency evacuation maps posted around the campus for the location of the evacuation meeting point.

Health, Safety and Courtesy on Campus

Out of respect for your fellow students, please note the following:

Dress code

At all times students should wear neat attire while on campus. For health and safety reasons you must always wear footwear.

Eating and Drinking

Eating and drinking is only allowed in student kitchen or outside of campus. Only bottled water may be consumed in classrooms.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the building or immediately outside of the entry door.

Mobile Phones

Please ensure your mobile phone is switched off or to silent during classes.

Fee Payment Details

Your course fees are payable on the dates set out in your Letter of Offer/Student Agreement. We accept payment via direct deposit.

We will send you a reminder via Email/SMS when your fees are due. Please remember to let us know if you change your email address or mobile telephone number so we can keep your details up to date.

Late Payment Penalty Fee

If payment for tuition is not received by VIA Education, you will be charged progressive late payment penalty fee. The late payment penalty fee is automatically added to your account if payment is not received by the due date.

The progressive late payment fee structure is as below:

Up to 7 days overdue	\$100
8 days to 14 days overdue	another \$50
15 days to 21 days overdue	another \$50
22 days to 28 days overdue	another \$50

Maximum late payment penalty fee will be capped at \$250

Please refer to the below chart to understand the late payment penalty fee structure:



Overdue Fees

Students with fees more than 2 days overdue are at risk having their enrolment cancelled. Students with overdue fees will be excluded from classes and assessments, have their document withheld, and will be suspended from the computer network, as well as e-learning portal.

Financial Hardship

If you are experiencing difficulties in paying your fees as they fall due it is important to come and talk to us in person as soon as possible. In certain limited circumstances we may be able to come to an arrangement such as implementing a payment plan during periods of short-term financial hardship. To be considered, you must be in genuine short-term financial hardship caused by compassionate and compelling reasons beyond your control.

Updating your Contact Information

It is important that VIA Education holds your current contact information on file. This is also a requirement of all student visa holders.

Please ensure that the mobile telephone number and email address we have on file is always correct. You are required to notify VIA Education of any change of your contact details during your course of study within 7 days. To update your details, please see Student Services.

We will send you an email every six months to verify your contact details.

Privacy

VIA Education is committed to ensuring that all stakeholders' privacy is protected at all times. It is bound by the National Privacy Principles (NPPs) contained in the *Privacy Act 1988* and the *Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012*.

VIA Education will not reveal, disclose, sell, distribute, rent, license, share or pass personal information on to a third party without your knowledge and consent, unless required by legislation or law.

In order to provide you with training and assessment services, we are required to disclose personal information to third parties such as government and regulatory agencies for legal and regulatory requirements.

Data Quality and Security

VIA Education will take reasonable steps to ensure that personal information is accurate, complete and up to date. Students are encouraged to help us keep their personal information accurate, complete and up to date by informing us of any changes.

We are committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. We take reasonable steps to protect personal information from misuse, loss and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.

Information shall be destroyed when it is no longer needed for its purpose or after the required retention period as defined by Commonwealth and State legislation.

VIA Education will take all reasonable steps to ensure the security of physical files, computers, networks and communications are maintained at all times.

Access and correction

You have a right to access the personal information we store about you. If you find that the information we hold about you is inaccurate or out-of-date then we will correct it. If you wish to access your information then we ask you to contact us.

When requesting access to personal information, individuals will need to:

- Make a request formally in writing
- Provide sufficient formal identification
- Provide data storage if necessary
- Pay all reasonable costs associated with the provision of the data

Requests will be processed within 20 working days.

Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation of Enrolment Policy and Procedure

Policy

All requests for deferral, suspension or cancellation initiated by students must be in writing. VIA Education will not accept verbal requests.

VIA Education will assess all applications for deferment or suspension within two working days in cases where all required evidence has been received.

Deferrals

Students can request to defer their studies due to:



- Delays in student visa grant (applies to offshore students)
- Failure to complete a unit or course which is either an entry requirement or pre-requisite of the course to be commenced
- Compassionate or compelling circumstances

Suspensions

Students can request to temporarily suspend their enrolment if there are compassionate or compelling circumstances.

VIA Education may suspend or cancel the enrolment of a student, for serious and wilful misconduct. Misconduct may include, but is not limited to, criminal activity, harassment or verbal abuse of staff or students, failure to pay fees, maintaining erratic course progress, plagiarism or cheating.

In the event of a suspension there will be no reduction in the tuition fees or change of due dates and any additional costs in completing the enrolled course must be borne by the student.

Cancellations

Students can request to cancel their course or package by completing the appropriate form and providing supporting evidence.

Students cancelling their course or package that has already commenced must provide VIA Education at least four weeks' written notice (required notice) prior to their next fees due date.

Student who fail to provide required notice are required to pay course cancellation fee (equivalent to four weeks of tuition fees) in lieu of notice.

Students are also required to pay in full all fees that become due prior to submitting written withdrawal and fees that fall due between the date of application and date of withdrawal.

VIA Education may suspend or cancel the enrolment of a student, for serious and wilful misconduct. Misconduct may include, but is not limited to, criminal activity, harassment or verbal abuse of staff or students, failure to pay fees, maintaining erratic course progress, plagiarism or cheating.

Refunds in the event of cancellations will be dealt in accordance with the *Refunds Policy*.

Appeals

Students have the right to appeal a decision by VIA Education to suspend or cancel their enrolment and VIA Education will not report the change in enrolment in PRISMS until the internal complaints and appeals process is completed unless extenuating circumstances exist.

Overseas students

Requests for release received along with the cancellation notice are dealt in accordance with the *Student Transfer Policy and Procedure*.

VIA Education will inform the overseas students that deferring, suspending or cancelling enrolment may affect their student visa and they must seek advice from the Immigration department on the potential impacts on their student visa

VIA Education will report the change to the overseas student's enrolment as a result of deferral, suspension or cancellation in PRISMS in accordance with section 19 of the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)*.

VIA Education provides this policy in the Student Handbook which is made available to students on its website. This policy is also explained to students during the orientation.

VIA Education will keep all documentary evidence on the student's file related to the assessment of the application for deferral, suspension or cancellation.

Definitions

'Compassionate or compelling' circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the overseas student and which have an impact upon the overseas student's course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but are not limited to:

- serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the overseas student was unable to attend classes
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible a death certificate and evidence of relationship should be provided)
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the overseas student's studies; or
- a traumatic experience, which could include:
 - involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or
 - witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, and this has impacted on the overseas student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists 'reports)
- Any other matters considered by VIA Education

PRISMS - The Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) is the system used to process information given to the Secretary of Department of Education and Training by registered providers (source: *National Code 2018*)

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

- 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.

1. Procedure for assessing an application for deferral or suspension

Student Initiated

- 1.1. To request deferral or suspension, students must complete a *Course Deferment/ Suspension (leave of absence) Form* and submit documentary evidence in support of their application.
- 1.2. Student Services Manager acknowledges the applications on the same day of receiving it.
- 1.3. Student Services Manager assesses the application as per the *Student Course Variation Guidelines* and with consideration given to the evidence justifying the following circumstances and conditions:
 - 1.3.1. the circumstances preventing student from attending for a period of time
 - 1.3.2. the circumstances that are outside of the student's control
 - 1.3.3. the circumstances that are compassionate and/or compelling
 - 1.3.4. evidence supplied by a student is in English, or with an English translation
 - 1.3.5. evidence supports the reason the student has requested
- 1.4. Evidence provided by students may include, but is not limited to:
 - 1.4.1. a certificate from a licensed medical practitioner indicating that the student is unable to attend classes between two dates; or
 - 1.4.2. a medical or death certificate for a member of the student's immediate family;
or
 - 1.4.3. other forms of evidence that could be reasonably construed to demonstrate a compassionate or compelling circumstance



- 1.5. Student Services Manager, after completing the assessment of application and supporting evidence, advises students of the outcome of their application by sending an outcome email. This email informs overseas students that approval of deferral or suspension may affect their student visa and they must seek advice from the Immigration department.
- 1.6. Student Services Manager records the outcomes in *Student Course Variations Register* and uploads documents in the Student Management System.

VIA Education Initiated

- 1.7. If VIA Education decides to suspend a student's enrolment, an email notifying this intention will be sent to students by relevant staff. This email informs students to access the complaints and appeals process if they disagree with the decision.
- 1.8. Student Services Manager assesses VIA Education initiated suspensions using *Staff Use Student Course Variation Form* and as per the *Student Course Variation Guidelines* and advises students of the outcome.
- 1.9. Student Services Manager records the outcomes in *Student Course Variations Register* and uploads documents in the Student Management System.

2. Procedure for assessing an application for cancellation

Student Initiated

- 2.1. Students requesting cancellation must first speak to the Student Services Manager to discuss their situation and explore support options
- 2.2. Overseas students who notifies that they wish to change their status from ESOS student (student on student visa) to Non-ESOS student (students who obtained another visa other than student visa) must do so by completing *Notification of Change of ESOS Status form*
- 2.3. When students decide to cancel their enrolment, they are given *Student Withdrawal Form* and is advised of the supporting documentation that must be submitted.
- 2.4. Student Services Manager acknowledges the applications within two working days of receiving it.
- 2.5. Student Services Manager assesses the applications as per the *Student Course Variation Guidelines* and in consultation with the CEO or their delegate
- 2.6. Student Services Manager, after completing the assessment of application and supporting evidence, advises students of the outcome of their application by sending an outcome email.



- 2.7. Approval outcome email informs overseas students that their current and future enrolments will be cancelled, and this may affect their student visa and they must seek advice from the Immigration department.
- 2.8. Rejection outcome email informs students to access the complaints and appeals process if they disagree with the decision.
- 2.9. Student Services Manager records the outcomes in *Student Course Variations Register* and uploads documents in the Student Management System.

VIA Education Initiated

- 2.10. If VIA Education decides to cancel a student's enrolment, an email notifying this intention will be sent to students by relevant staff. This email informs students to access the complaints and appeals process if they disagree with the decision.
- 2.11. Student Services Manager assesses VIA Education initiated cancellations using *Staff Use Student Course Variation Form* and as per the *Student Course Variation Guidelines* and advises students of the outcome.
- 2.12. Student Services Manager records the outcomes in *Student Course Variations Register* and uploads documents in the Student Management System.

Student Transfer Policy and Procedure

Overseas Students Transferring to VIA Education

VIA Education will not knowingly enrol an overseas student wishing to transfer from another registered provider prior to the completion of six months of his/her principal course of study, except in the circumstances listed below:

- the releasing provider, or the course in which the overseas student is enrolled, has ceased to be registered
- the releasing provider has had a sanction imposed on its registration by the ESOS agency that prevents the overseas student from continuing his or her course at that registered provider
- the releasing provider has agreed to the overseas student's release and recorded the data of effect and reason for release in PRISMS.
- any government sponsor of the overseas student considers the change to be in the student's best interests and has provided written support for the change.

Overseas Students Transferring from VIA Education

Circumstances where a transfer will be granted

A request to transfer within the initial six-month period of the principal course will be granted where:

- (a) VIA Education has been provided with a letter from another registered provider confirming that a valid enrolment offer has been made, and
- (b) the student has no outstanding fees, and
- (c) The transfer is in the student's 'best interests'

Circumstances where a transfer may be in the student's 'best interests' include, but are not limited to, the following:

- the overseas student will be reported because they are unable to achieve satisfactory course progress at the level they are studying, even after engaging with VIA's intervention strategy
- there is evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances
- VIA Education fails to deliver the course as outlined in the written agreement
- there is evidence that the overseas student's reasonable expectations about their current course are not being met
- there is evidence that the overseas student was misled by VIA Education or an education or migration agent regarding VIA Education or its course, and the course is therefore unsuitable to their needs and/or study objectives
- an appeal (internal or external) on another matter results in a decision or recommendation to release the overseas student.

Where a decision to release a student has been made, VIA Education will record the date of effect and the reason for the release in PRISMS. If granted, a release will be provided at no cost to the overseas student and recorded on PRISMS. VIA Education will advise the student of the need to contact Immigration to seek advice on whether a new student visa is required.

The approval of transfer of a student to another institution does not indicate the agreement to provide any refund. Refunds are governed by the *Refunds Policy and Procedure* independent of this policy.



Circumstances where a transfer request may be refused

A request to transfer from VIA Education within the initial six-month period of the principal course of study may be refused:

- (a) in circumstances where a student fails to satisfy either (a), (b), or (c) listed above
- (b) where a transfer may jeopardise the student's progression through a package of courses
- (c) where a transfer will be otherwise detrimental to the welfare of a student
- (d) where the student has not accessed full range of support services available to him/her.
- (e) where the student is trying to avoid being reported to the Immigration for failure to meet the VIA Education's course progress requirements.
- (f) Student request is based on employment or migration related issues
- (g) Student is transferring to a similar course or low-level course
- (h) Student's request is a consequence of the adverse influence of another party
- (i) Student is claiming financial hardship as the reason

Where a request for a transfer is not granted, the student will be notified in writing, including the reasons for refusing the request and the student's right to appeal the decision in accordance with VIA Education's *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

VIA Education will not finalise the student's refusal status in PRISMS until the appeal finds in favour of the VIA Education, or the student has chosen not to access the complaint and appeals processes within 20 working day period, or the overseas student withdraws from the process.

Decision timeframe

A decision on a request to transfer will be made within 10 business days provided all necessary evidence and details is provided by the student at the time the request is made.

Records

All records of requests for release, and material used in making the decision, will be retained for two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student.

Definitions

PRISMS - The Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) is the system used to process information given to the Secretary of Department of Education and Training by registered providers

The principal course of study refers to the main course of study to be undertaken by an overseas student where a student visa has been issued for multiple courses of study. The principal course of study would normally be the final course of study where the overseas student arrives in Australia with a student visa that covers multiple courses.

source: National Code 2018

Procedure for assessing student's request to transfer to VIA Education

VIA Education receives *Enrolment Form* from the student who indicates that he/she is currently studying at another institution.

If the student provides evidence of the following, then the transfer requirements are met

- the releasing provider, or the course in which the overseas student is enrolled, has ceased to be registered
- the releasing provider has had a sanction imposed on its registration by the ESOS agency that prevents the overseas student from continuing his or her course at that registered provider
- the releasing provider has agreed to the overseas student's release and recorded the data of effect and reason for release in PRISMS.
- any government sponsor of the overseas student considers the change to be in the student's best interests and has provided written support for the change.

VIA Education uses PRISMS records to verify if the student has completed 6 months of their principal course or their principal provider released the student and indicated this in PRISMS. Copy of the student visa is also used to ascertain what the principal course is and when the student arrived in Australia.

If they have not met the above points, the application process is stopped, and student informed of their options e.g. to request a release from their principal provider.

Students can be provided with a 'conditional' offer which clearly states that an offer of a place is conditional upon obtaining release from their principal provider.

Procedure for assessing student's request to transfer from VIA Education

Students make a written request using *Student Withdrawal Form* to transfer to another provider. This form along with the supporting documentation including, but not limited to, a valid offer of enrolment from the new institution are submitted to the Student Services Manager who will assess the transfer request considering the following questions:

- Does the student have any outstanding fees payable?
- Is the student fully aware of the study issues involved in the transfer?
- Is the student simply trying to avoid being reported to the Immigration department for unsatisfactory course progress?
- Is the transfer going to jeopardise the student's progression through a package of courses?
- Is student using reasons such as employment or migration issue to transfer
- Has the student recently started studying the course and the full range of support services are yet to be provided or offered to the student?
- Is the student transferring to similar course or low-level course?
- Is there any adverse influence of another party on student to make the decision to withdraw?

If the answers to the above questions are satisfactory and by considering that the transfer is in the best interest of the student, Student Services Manager, in consultation with the CEO or their delegate decides to release the student and indicates this in PRISMS. The student will also be advised of the need to contact the Immigration department to determine if they need to obtain a new visa. Student Services Manager reports student's termination of studies through PRISMS.

If any of the answers to the above questions are unclear, the Student Services Manager interviews the student and gain a full understanding of the circumstances. The Student Services Manager will make a recommendation if he/she believes the request should be refused and will inform the student in writing of the refusal outcome with reasons and indicate that the student may access the student appeal process if they seek an internal review of this decision.

Any appeals lodged by student are dealt in accordance with the *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

VIA Education provides appropriate mechanisms and services for students to have their complaints and appeals addressed fairly, professionally, efficiently and effectively and in a manner that ensures privacy, transparency, and where necessary confidentiality, of all parties involved. VIA Education ensures that:

- Complaints and Appeals Policy is publicly available on its website and is addressed in student agreement and during orientation program.
- Complaints and appeals are recorded, acknowledged and dealt promptly with assessment of the complaint or appeal commencing within 10 working days of it being made and the outcome finalised as soon as practicable.
- If the complaints handling or appeals process takes more than 60 calendar days, student is informed of the reasons and provided with regular updates on the progress of the matter.
- The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are applied at every stage of the complaints handling and appeals processes – this means that:
 - decisions are not predetermined, and all parties have the opportunity to tell their story before a decision is made;
 - the decision maker is independent of the issues being dealt with or decision being reviewed; and
 - opportunities are provided to seek independent external review of the decisions made.
- The student is given an opportunity to formally present his or her case at minimal or no cost and can be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings.
- Students are provided with written record of the outcome of the complaint or appeal.
- The complaints and appeals records are maintained securely.
- If the process fails to resolve the complaint or appeal internally, a review by an independent party via the external complaint and appeal process is available.
- Corrective actions and/or improvements resulting from the complaints and appeals processes are implemented as soon as possible and relevant parties are informed of the corrective and improvement actions.

Definitions

Complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction a student has about the services, actions and conduct of VIA Education, its trainers and assessors; its staff; its students; its authorised education agents; or any related party VIA Education engages to provide services. A complaint could be about academic matters, non-academic matters or the way someone has been treated.

Appeal is a request for review of a decision made by VIA Education, its trainers and assessors, and its staff members. An appeal could be about the decisions made in relation to enrolments, applications, services, formal complaints, assessment outcomes, course progress, refunds and non-payments.

Complaints and Appeals Resolution Process

- In all cases, issues that are the source of frustration or are in dispute should be resolved at the time, as they occur between the persons involved, where possible – this is called ‘Informal Resolution’.
- Sometimes, it will not be possible to resolve issues informally and in these cases, students should follow formal process by putting their complaint or appeal in writing – this is called ‘Formal Resolution’.
- If the internal process fails to resolve the complaint or appeal, then students can seek to have the decision reviewed externally by an independent party – this is called ‘Independent External Review’.

Refer to Complaints and Appeals Flow Chart

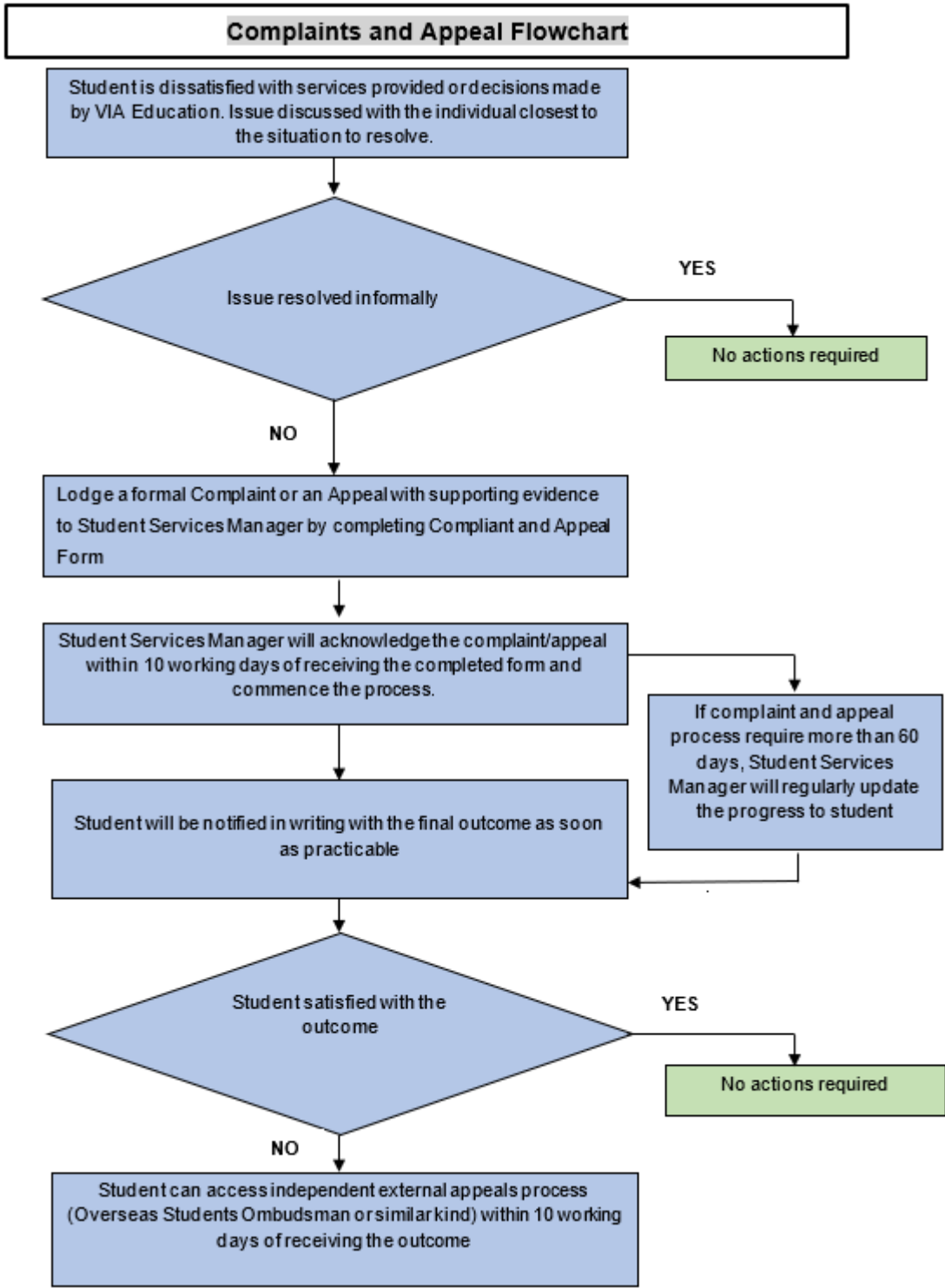
Procedures

1. Informal Resolution
 - a. Wherever possible VIA Education encourage students to resolve their issues informally by working through any matters of concern that they have with the individual closest to the situation.
 - b. If student is satisfied with the outcome, no further action is needed.
 - c. If student is not satisfied with the outcome, then he or she can attempt to resolve the issue formally.
2. Formal Resolution
 - a. Students may use the formal resolution if they are:
 - dissatisfied with the outcome at the informal resolution stage;

- not comfortable to resolve the issue informally; or
 - dissatisfied with the decision made by VIA Education, its staff or trainers and assessors.
- b. To commence the formal resolution, students must complete the *Complaints and Appeals Form* that can be obtained from Reception Desk or by contacting the Student Services Manager.
- c. Completed forms along with all supporting evidence must be submitted to the Student Services Manager who will acknowledge the complaint or appeal within 10 working days of the lodgement and registers details in the *Complaints and Appeals Register* and in Student Management System as a process record.
- d. The Student Services Manager reviews the information provided on the form and supporting evidence and refer the matter to the most appropriate management staff member for investigation (or review).
- e. The investigating management staff member will gather all evidence and conduct interviews as required.
- f. If the resolution of the complaint or appeal takes more than 60 calendar days (being the deadline for finalising the complaints/appeals), then the Student Services Manager informs the student the reasons for the delay and provides regular updates.
- g. Upon concluding the investigation or review, the investigating management staff member will prepare a written resolution report which includes the outcome, the evidence and other factors considered and their reasoning behind the outcome.
- h. Upon receipt of the resolution report, the Student Services Manager will:
- inform student, within 10 working days, about the outcome and their right of external appeal;
 - keep all relevant records in Complaints and Appeals folder;
 - update the process record in Student Management System;
 - upload the records into Student Management System;
 - record outcome in the *Complaints and Appeals Register*; and
 - communicate the outcome to relevant staff members where applicable.
3. Independent External Review
- a. If student decides to seek independent external review of the outcome, he or she must do so within 10 working days of receiving the outcome and notify VIA Education in writing.



- b. Domestic students are advised to contact National Training Complaints Hotline (Contact No: 13 38 73 website: <https://www.education.gov.au/NTCH>) who can assist students and refer their issue to appropriate agency or the NSW Fair Trading on 13 32 20.
- c. Overseas students are advised to contact Overseas Students Ombudsman on 1300 362 072 (Postal Address: GPO Box 442, Canberra ACT 2601 Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au web: www.ombudsman.gov.au)
- d. The Chief Executive Officer, or their delegate, will deal with the external reviews and appeals.
- e. Upon receiving the outcome from the external review body/agency, the Chief Executive Officer, or their delegate will
 - e.1. update the 'External Appeal' section of the form;
 - e.2. take all necessary corrective or improvement actions (if any);
 - e.3. keep all relevant records in Complaints and Appeals folder;
 - e.4. update the process record in Student Management System;
 - e.5. update the Continuous Improvement Register;
 - e.6. upload the records into Student Management System;
 - e.7. record outcome in the Complaints and Appeals Register; and
 - e.8. communicate the outcome to relevant staff members where applicable.



'No Children in the Campus' Policy

Policy Statement

While recognising the parental responsibilities of parents/carers, VIA Education must also consider the health and safety of the occupants of its premises. Specifically, the following issues must be considered when children are present in the campus.

- Health and safety of the child
- Hazards and disruptions the presence of child can cause to the operations
- Level of interference with students and staff
- Time required for parent/carer to be in campus
- Type of premises and environment

By considering the above issues and mindful of the significant risks to the health and safety of children, it is the policy of VIA Education not to allow children onto its premises.

Definitions

Child(ren): Person(s) under the age of 18 years.

Parent(s)/carer(s): Persons bringing their child(ren) onto the VIA Education premises.

What Parents/Carers can do

If you are a parent/carer with children under the age of five and if your spouse is unable to care for them, then you must make arrangements for child-care. Parent/carer is not permitted to bring children to campus in lieu of child-care.

To find information on New South Wales child-care centres, refer to the

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/information-for-parents-and-carers>

If you are a parent/carer with school-aged children, you must enrol them in school. To know more about school enrolments, visit the relevant school in your local area or locate the school in your area at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/school-finder>

Parents/carers bringing children for short duration

When parents/carers bring their child(ren) to the campus for short duration then they must take all reasonable steps to safeguard the health and safety of the child(ren) in their care while on campus. They must also ensure that they supervise their child(ren) and the children's presence is not disrupting the learning of other students and work of staff. VIA Education staff are not expected or required to supervise children of parents/carers.

Responsibility and liability related to children

VIA Education is not responsible or liable for any health and safety issues caused to the children while present on the campus and it is ultimately the responsibility of the parents/carers.

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CAMPUS FACILITIES

Entering and Leaving the Campus

The campus is entered via the ground floor of 565 George St, Sydney.

You can access levels 4 & 5 using the any of the two lifts available on ground floor. Exits are available via the two lifts or the main stairwell next to the lift. The stairs lead directly to the foyer, in which case please exit via the front of the building onto George St.

Emergency Facilities

In the event of an emergency it is important that you do not use the lifts to exit. There are two sets of fire stairs for leaving the building. The first, in between the two lifts, will allow emergency exit onto either George St via the foyer, or Liverpool St via the rear laneway. The second set of fire stairs can be found next to the entrance of classroom 5, and leads directly onto George St.

In all cases once you have exited the building in the event of emergency it is important you report to the building's muster point on the corner of George and Goulburn Streets so that your name can be marked off.

There is a floor plan showing emergency exit points and the muster point at the back of this Student Handbook, and there are copies conveniently located around the campus.

Dining Facilities

There are variety of food outlets in and around the building. Level two contains a restaurant. The building also hosts a sports bar and a separate lounge at Level 3 serviced by the City of Sydney RSL Club.



Please be advised that you need to sign in at RSL reception located on the ground level before you can use the club's facilities unless you are an RSL member.

Wi-Fi Access

A campus-wide Wi-Fi hotspot is available for all students. It requires a password to connect. Please see Student Services if you require assistance in connecting to the Wi-Fi network.

Student Kitchen Facilities

Food and beverage facilities may be found in the Student Kitchen. Please ensure you clean up after yourself. Please report any accidents or hazards you may notice to Student Services at the earliest opportunity.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

The following is a list of Acts or legislative instruments that relate to the operations of VIA Education.

The full text of each Act or legislative instrument may be found on www.legislation.gov.au

- *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011*
- *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000*
- *Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2001*
- *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015*
- *National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018*
- *Student Identifiers Act 2014*
- *Data Provision Requirements 2012*
- *Competition and Consumer Act 2010*
- *Competition and Consumer Regulations 2010*
- *Copyright Act 1968*
- *Privacy Act 1988*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*

This list may not be exhaustive and may be outdated at the time you read this. We maintain an updated list of legislation on our internal network and will be happy to provide it upon request. Please contact Student Services to make an enquiry regarding access to current legislation.

YOUR STUDIES

Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

VIA Education offers credit transfer (CT) and recognition of prior learning (RPL) to all students. It informs intending students of the availability of CT and RPL prior to enrolment via pre-enrolment information materials.

Definitions

Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) means the framework for regulated qualifications in the Australian education and training system, as agreed by the Commonwealth, State and Territory ministerial council with responsibility for higher education.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) means an assessment process that assesses the competency/s of an individual that may have been acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual meets the requirements specified in the training package or VET accredited courses.

- formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction and is linked to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, a certificate, diploma or university degree);
- non-formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction, but does not lead to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, in-house professional development programs conducted by a business); and
- informal learning refers to learning that results through experience of work-related, social, family, hobby or leisure activities (for example the acquisition of interpersonal skills developed through several years as a sales representative).

(source: Standards for RTOs 2015)

Statement of attainment means a statement issued to a person confirming that the person has satisfied the requirements of the unit/s of competency or accredited short course specified in the statement. *(source: Standards for RTOs 2015)*

Registrar has the meaning given in the *Student Identifiers Act 2014* *(source Standards for RTOs 2015)*

Procedures

1. Assessing Credit Transfer Requests

- a. An application for credit transfer may be made where students have previously completed nationally recognised training from a registered training organisation. Evidence of prior studies will include a formal qualification, an academic transcript and/or a statement of attainment issued by a registered training organisation or authenticated VET transcripts issued by the Registrar.
- b. Submitted certification documents will be verified in all instances. Verification includes:
 - i. Confirming that the issuing organisation is a Registered Training Organisation and has the qualifications on scope, as evidenced by an entry in the training.gov.au website
 - ii. Verifying the document itself by contacting the issuing RTO or using the providers' electronic verification tools if necessary. This verification step will be taken with the student's permission as indicated in the enrolment agreement.
- c. Students are required to complete Application for Credit Transfer form to commence the credit transfer process.
- d. Students are required to provide originals of all qualifications, which will be copied onsite. The words "Original Sighted", the date, and the signature of the staff member making the copies will be written on each page of the copies or alternatively a stamp could also be used.
- e. Admissions staff submits completed forms and supporting documents to the Training Manager for assessment.
- f. The Training Manager will assess the application within 10 working days. The qualifications will be verified at this time. If the issuing registered training organisation requires fees for processing verifications the student will be notified that this cost will be passed on to them.
- g. The student will be requested to sign their acceptance of the outcome. This acceptance will be retained for a minimum two-year period and will be placed into their student file.
- h. The student management system will be updated with records indicating that the credit transfer was approved.
- i. Scanned copies of the application and the supporting evidence will be uploaded onto the student management system.
- j. For overseas students, the CoE duration will be modified if applicable.

2. Assessing Recognition of Prior Learning Requests

- a. An application for recognition of prior *learning* may be made using the Application for Enrolment where students believe they have existing skills and knowledge related to one or more units.
- b. Applications for RPL are assessed against the requirements of one or more units of competency using a combination of the following evidence:
 - Existing formal qualifications
 - Interviews
 - Work samples
 - Challenge tests
 - Written questioning
 - Practical demonstrations
- c. Students are required to complete Application for Enrolment and indicate that they wish to apply for RPL.
- d. Students are required to provide originals of any supporting documentation they are relying on as evidence, which will be copied onsite. The words “Original Sighted”, the date, and the signature of the staff member making the copies will be written on each page of the copies or alternatively a stamp could be used.
- e. The Training Manager will assign the application to a qualified assessor as soon as receiving the RPL evidence.
- f. The assessor will verify all supplied evidence. If any third parties require a fee for processing a verification request the student will be notified that this cost will be passed on to them.
- g. The assigned assessor will review the evidence provided and arrange an interview with the student. At this time the assessor will explain any further evidence that may be required and the format of any further assessment activity to complete any gaps.
- h. If the supplied evidence and further gap assessments meet the requirements of the unit, the assessor will advise the Training Manager using the supplied form and will submit all of the evidence he/she relied upon.
- i. The student will be requested to sign their acceptance of the outcome. This acceptance will be retained for a minimum two-year period and will be placed into their student file.
- j. The student management system will be updated with records indicating that the recognition of prior learning application was approved.
- k. Scanned copies of the application and the supporting evidence will be uploaded onto the student management system.

- I. For overseas students, the CoE duration will be modified if applicable.

Assessments

Each unit of competency will have more than one assessment task to be completed. Your trainer and assessor will advise you of the number and timing of assessment tasks at the beginning of each unit. If you experience any difficulties demonstrating competency in any of your units, it is important that you discuss it with us as soon as possible so that we may be able to assist you.

If you experience difficulties with your assessments, please speak with your trainer or the Training Manager.

All assessments must have the supplied cover sheet attached. All content must be your own, except for any group activity work which must clearly show your individual contribution. If you submit the work of others as if it were your own, you will be automatically deemed Not Competent for that unit.

Assessment Results

For each unit of competency, students must satisfactorily complete all required assessment tasks to be eligible for an overall result of 'Competent'.

Students who:

- demonstrate unsatisfactory performance in any of the assessment tasks;
- fail to submit required assessment evidence by the required due date;
- are found to be cheating or plagiarising; or
- are absent to assessments

will receive the result 'Not Competent'.

Notifying students of an unsuccessful outcome

As soon as results are entered in the Student Management System, Training Manager, or their delegate, will send a notification email to students where the outcome is 'not competent'. Students are advised in the email that they are required to meet with the Training Manager, or their delegate, to discuss their options which can include appeal or re-assessment.

Appealing an assessment result

Any student who believes that the outcome awarded for an assessment or unit does not fairly reflect their achievement has the right to an appeal in accordance with the *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

Re-assessment process

Training Manager, or their delegate, will review the reassessment request from the students and informs this to the Student Services Officer for determination of reassessment fee applicable.

For written tasks, such as short answer questions, portfolios and reports, the student is advised to re-submit the required evidence.

For practical tasks, such as role plays or presentations, the student is advised to negotiate an appropriate time and place with the assessor to complete the activity

Student Services Officer records following details on the *Reassessment Administration Form* printed from Student Management System:

- List of assessment tasks to be completed by the students
- Name of the assessor allocated to administer and mark the reassessment tasks
- A determination on whether the reassessment fee is applicable or not, based on the student's attendance percentage for the unit for which reassessment is sought.
- Approval of reassessment fee waivers authorised by the management (if applicable)

Students who maintain minimum 50% attendance for a unit that was deemed Not Competent receives first re-assessment attempt free of charge.

Student Services Officer creates an intervention process record in Student Management System to track the progress of current reassessments and informs the Training Manager to commence the administration of reassessments.

The Training Manager forwards the reassessment evidence provided by the student to allocated assessor for marking or, in case of practical assessments, negotiates a suitable date and time with both assessor and the student.

Assessors, after completing the marking, updates 'Re-Submission Attempt' section of *UoC Outcome Record & Marking Checklist*.

The Training Manager, or their delegate, after receiving the completed reassessment evidence and recording sheets will:



- update the results in Student Management System;
- update the intervention process record; and
- inform student of the outcome of the reassessment.

Course Progress Monitoring Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

VIA Education, as required by the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018*, (National Code 2018) must monitor overseas students' course progress for each course in which the overseas student is enrolled to ensure the overseas student is in a position to complete the course within the expected duration specified on the overseas student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).

This policy and procedures outlined below will enable VIA Education to identify, notify and assist overseas students who are at risk of not meeting course requirements.

The information about this policy and procedures along with 'Course Progress Monitoring Flow Chart' is provided to overseas students prior to enrolment via Student Handbook. This policy is also discussed during student orientation sessions.

Definitions

Compulsory study period is a study period in which a student must enrol unless granted a deferment or suspension. It is 9 weeks (consisting of one 4-week block and one 5-week block) for courses of 52 weeks or less duration and 18 weeks (consisting of two 4-week blocks and two 5-week blocks) for courses with more than 52 weeks duration.

Block is a discrete period of study within a course with either 4 weeks or 5 weeks in duration.

Unsatisfactory course progress is defined as not successfully completing or demonstrating competency in more than 50% of the course requirements (units) in a compulsory study period.

Course progress breach occurs when overseas student maintains unsatisfactory course progress in two consecutive compulsory study periods.

Attendance is maintaining 20 scheduled course contact hours per week during compulsory study periods

PRISMS - The Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) is the system used to process information given to the Secretary of Department of Education and Training by registered providers (*source: National Code 2018*)

Compassionate or compelling circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the overseas student and which have an impact upon the overseas student's course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but are not limited to:

- serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the overseas student was unable to attend classes
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible a death certificate and evidence of relationship should be provided)
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the overseas student's studies; or
- a traumatic experience, which could include:
 - involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or
 - witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, and this has impacted on the overseas student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists 'reports)
- any other matters considered by VIA Education

Intervention Strategies may include one or more of the following:

- Providing opportunities for students to be reassessed within set deadlines including tutorial classes if required.
- Advising students about attendance requirements if nonattendance is identified as an issue.
- Assessing the impact of unsatisfactory course progress on student's ability to complete the course within the CoE duration and advising student to extend the enrolment if necessary.
- Advising students on English language support and referrals if English language proficiency is identified as an issue
- Advising students about personal counselling referrals if personal issues are identified as the issue, and if necessary, suspend the course due to compassionate or compelling circumstances.
- Assessing the suitability of the course and advising student a suitable alternative course that better meets student's needs and capabilities.

Procedures

1. Informing students of the course progress requirements before they commence the course

- a. This policy is provided to students prior to enrolment via Student Handbook (available on VIA Education website).
- b. A link to Student Handbook is contained within each overseas student's written agreement. Student must acknowledge and sign the written agreement.
- c. The following key points are discussed during student orientation:
 - course timetables, compulsory study periods and assessment due dates
 - requirements for achieving satisfactory course progress
 - steps students can take to maintain satisfactory progress
 - *Academic Misconduct Policy* and its impact on course progress
 - processes for assessing course progress requirements and identifying overseas students at risk of unsatisfactory course progress
 - details of the intervention strategies to assist at risk students
 - processes for determining the point at which the overseas student has failed to meet satisfactory course progress
- d. After the completion of the orientation, students must acknowledge and sign the *Student Orientation Form*.

2. Identifying, notifying and assisting students at risk of not meeting course progress requirements - Early intervention

- a. Immediately after the conclusion of each block, once the results have been verified, the Training Manager or their delegate produces a *Not Competent Unit Results Report* from Student Management System (SMS).
- b. A '*Not Competent Result Notification*' will be sent to all those students who are deemed 'Not Competent' in one or more units in that block. In this email, students are advised to discuss results and options (reassessments or appeals) with the Training Manager.
- c. If student requests for reassessment, the process described in the *Assessment Policy and Procedure* is followed.
- d. If student requests to appeal the assessment decision, the appeals process as per the *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure* will begin.

3. Monitoring course progress and determining the point at which the student has failed to meet satisfactory course progress

- a. Immediately after the conclusion of each block, once results have been verified, the Training Manager or their delegate produces *Compulsory Study Periods Not Competent Results Report* from SMS which provides details of students and their academic performance (Not Competent unit results percentage) in multiple compulsory study periods.
- b. The Training Manager or their delegate uses *UCPW & ITR Control Sheet* to identify the relevant study periods and to record the type of warning that needs to be sent to students who are identified as maintaining unsatisfactory course progress.
- c. The Training Manager or their delegate creates a list of all students who maintained unsatisfactory course progress in one compulsory study period and sends the *Unsatisfactory Course Progress Warning* email from SMS notifying them to attend a formal intervention meeting.
- d. An intervention process record is then created in SMS by the Training Manager or their delegate. These intervention records are regularly reviewed by the Training Manager or their delegate to ensure interventions are managed properly.
- e. During the formal intervention meeting, the Training Manager or their delegate reviews class and online activity participation records, completed assessments, warning letters sent in that study period and any deferral/suspension records and staff file notes. The following matters will be considered:
 - Compassionate or compelling circumstances including critical incidents impacting student's course progress and any support required
 - Impact of approved deferrals or suspensions on student's course progress
 - Appropriate intervention strategies to assist student to maintain satisfactory course progress
 - Extension of course duration due to any or all of the above matters
- f. The Training Manager or their delegate records the course progress details, intervention strategies proposed and associated action plan in the *Course Progress Intervention Strategy Agreement*. Student must sign the agreement to indicate that he/she understands and agrees with the intervention strategy proposed
- g. At this point, the Training Manager also reminds student of the consequences of not following the intervention strategies and consequence of maintaining unsatisfactory course progress in 2 consecutive study periods.
- h. From this point, student is required to adhere to the intervention strategies and associated action plan and any failure to follow the intervention strategies will result

in an *Intention to Cancel Enrolment due to Erratic Course Progress* being issued to the student by the Training Manager, and this may result in cancellation of the enrolment.

- i. The Training Manager maintains relevant documents in Course Progress Monitoring folder. Electronic copies are also maintained in the SMS.
- j. The Training Manager reviews the student progress at times discussed with the student in the agreement. At least one review should occur after 4 weeks of the initial consultation.

4. Notifying students unsatisfactory course progress in two consecutive study periods

- a. Immediately after the conclusion of each block, once results have been verified, the Training Manager or their delegate produces *Compulsory Study Periods Not Competent Results Report* from SMS which provides details of students and their academic performance (Not Competent unit results percentage) in multiple compulsory study periods.
- k. The Training Manager or their delegate uses *UCPW & ITR Control Sheet* to identify the relevant study periods and to record the type of warning that needs to be sent to students who are identified as maintaining unsatisfactory course progress.
- b. The Training Manager or their delegate creates a list of all students who maintained unsatisfactory course progress in two consecutive study periods and sends the *Notice of Intention to Report (ITR) Unsatisfactory Course Progress* email from SMS.
- c. The ITR informs the student the reasons for the decision and that student can access the VIA Education's *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure* and the student has 20 working days from the date of the email in which to do so.
- d. An intervention process record is then created in SMS by the Training Manager or their delegate. These intervention records are regularly reviewed by the Training Manager or their delegate to ensure reporting process is managed properly.
- e. Training Manager or their delegate records the issuance of ITR to student in *ITR Register*.
- f. The Training Manager will note and set a reminder in a calendar when 20 working days has lapsed and check if an appeal has been lodged.
- g. If student lodges an appeal, the appeals process as per *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure* will begin.
- h. Grounds for appeal

A student may appeal on the following grounds:

- VIA Education's failure to record unit outcomes accurately, or

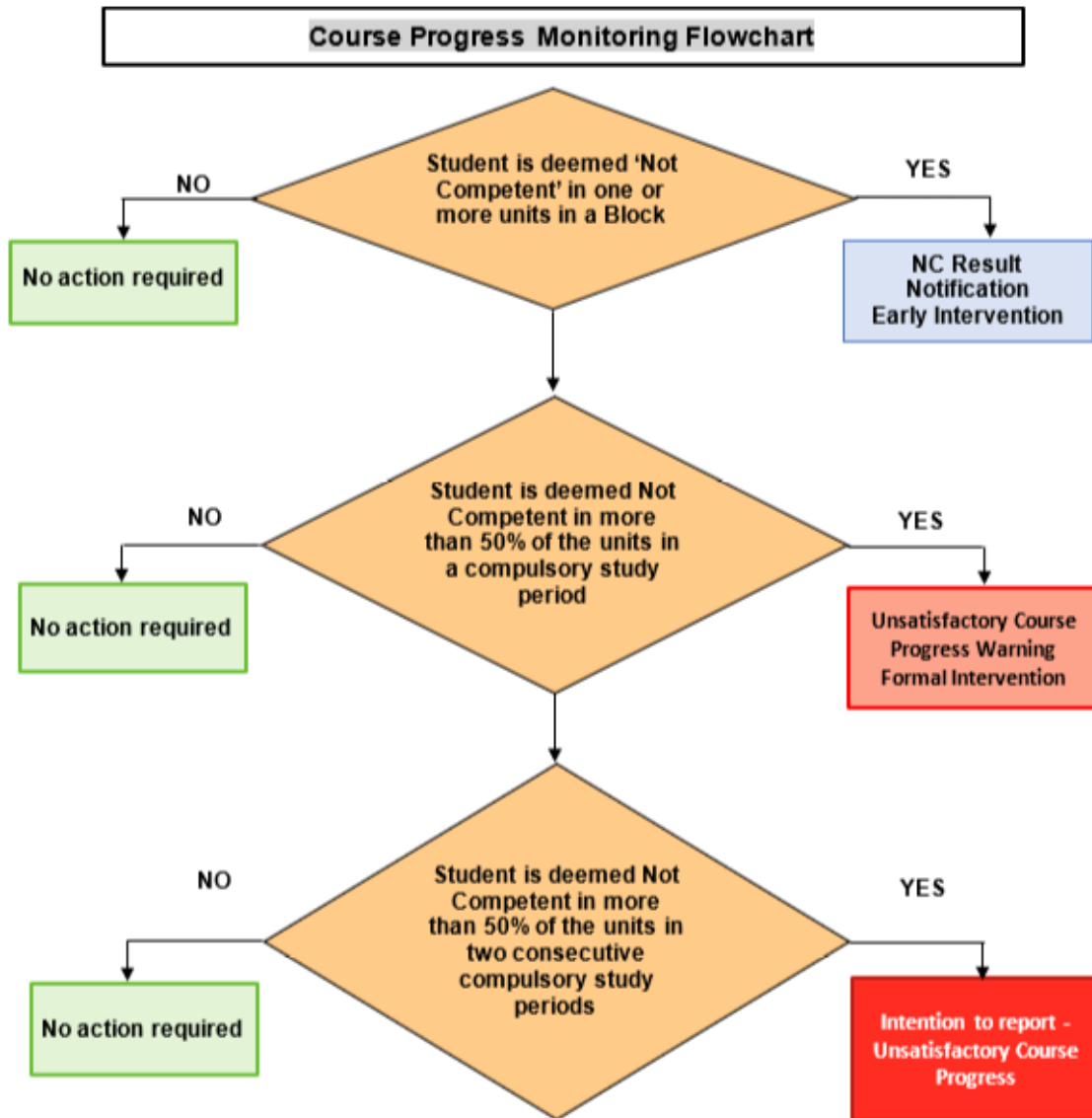
- Compassionate or compelling circumstances, or
 - VIA Education has not implemented its intervention strategy and other policies according to its documented policies and procedures that have been made available to the student.
- i. VIA Education maintains overseas students' enrolment by only reporting their course progress breach in PRISMS in accordance with the section 19(2) of the *ESOS Act 2000* if:
 - the internal and external complaints processes have been completed and the decision or recommendation supports the VIA Education's decision, or
 - the overseas student has chosen not to access the internal complaints and appeals process within the 20 working day period, or
 - the overseas student has chosen not to access the external complaints and appeals process, or
 - the overseas student withdraws from the internal or external appeals processes by notifying VIA Education in writing.
 - j. If any of the above occurs, The Training Manager completes, except in the case of an external appeals, the *Staff Use Student Course Variation Form* and forwards this to the Student Services Manager to proceed with the reporting of student's course progress breach to the Department of Education via PRISMS. The Training Manager records the outcome in the *ITR Register*.
 - k. If appeals process involves student seeking an independent external review of VIA Education's decision, then the reporting and/or rectification responsibility rests with the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate.
 - l. Following PRISMS and SMS updates, the Student Services Manager updates the *Student Course Variations (SCV) Register* and file all relevant documents in student files and uploads all relevant documents in SMS.
 - m. The Training Manager in consultation with the Student Services Manager reviews any pending processes/interventions related to the reported student in SMS updates records as required.

5. Monitoring progress to ensure students complete their course within the expected duration of their CoE

- a. Monitoring of course progress also involves the monitoring of each student's course completion within the expected duration as specified on the student's CoE.
- b. VIA Education does not deliver a course exclusively by online or distance learning to an overseas student.



- c. VIA Education ensures that any online or distance delivery component of the course delivered to overseas student is consistent with requirements of *National Code 2018*.
- d. VIA Education ensures above requirements by:
- setting a standard pathway course timetables that ensures:
 - courses delivered to overseas students are based on full-time study (20 scheduled course contact hours per week)
 - all units and assessments are delivered within a fixed timeframe
 - not more than one third of the course is delivered using online or distance delivery
 - overseas students, in each compulsory study period, study at least one unit that is not by distance or online unless the student is completing the last unit of their course
 - using a student management system that can identify any student that has not been assigned into a class in each block
 - not permitting students to reduce their study load except in very limited circumstances
 - not permitting a student to extend their CoE period except in very limited circumstances, these circumstances include:
 - there are compassionate or compelling circumstances based on supporting evidence provided by the overseas student, or
 - VIA Education implemented intervention strategy for the overseas student because the overseas student is at risk of not meeting course progress requirements, or
 - an approved deferral or suspension of the overseas student's enrolment has occurred
- e. Where a student is identified as being at risk of not completing course requirements by their CoE end date an intervention strategy with recommendation to extend the course duration will be put in place as outlined in sections 3.3 and 3.4 above. In addition to the processes described in these sections, the Training Manager or their delegate notifies students, at least one month prior to their course completion date, of any outstanding units. A 'Course Finish and Outstanding Units Notification' email will be sent from SMS.
- f. If VIA Education extends the duration of an overseas student's enrolment and the student's visa will expire prior to completion of the course, the student will be advised to contact the Immigration department to seek advice on any potential impacts on their visa, including the need to obtain a new visa.



Academic Misconduct Policy

Policy Statement

Academic misconduct occurs:

- when a student reproduces someone else's words, ideas, or findings and present them as their own without proper acknowledgment; and/or
- when student attempts to cheat or act dishonestly in assessment tasks.

The consequences of being caught plagiarising or cheating may include:

- Repeating an assessment task.
- Repeating the entire unit.
- Suspension from course
- Possible cancellation of course

The cancellation of course for overseas students mean that their student visa may also be cancelled.

This information is available in Student Handbook. Students are provided with information on this policy during orientation.

Definitions

Academic Misconduct

- Direct copying of sentences, paragraphs or other extracts from someone else's published work (including on the Internet and in software) without acknowledging the source;
- Paraphrasing someone else's words without acknowledging the source;
- Using facts and information derived from a source without acknowledging the source;
- Using ideas directly derived from an identifiable author without acknowledging the source;
- Producing assignments using the work of other people (e.g. a student);
- Using the work of other members of a group project without acknowledging who contributed the work;
- Copying from another student's work;
- Submitting someone else's work as their own;
- Using a diagram from another text or the Internet as a basis for your diagram without acknowledging the source;



- Taking statistics from another source and using them in a new table or figure without acknowledgement;
- Buying assessments from the Internet or another student and submitting it as their own work; or
- Making up fake quotes or sources.

Dealing with academic misconduct process

Students who are found cheating or guilty of plagiarism in any form of assessment will be deemed 'Not Competent' for the relevant unit on confirmation of the breach. All confirmed cases of cheating or plagiarism are recorded on the student's file using *Student File Note* and/or in Student Management System.

Students found cheating will receive a formal written warning from the Training Manager or their delegate advising that a second breach will result in the student being suspended or his/her enrolment being cancelled.

Trainers will explain the terms plagiarism and cheating during their classes. If they identify a suspected case of plagiarism and/or cheating, they will notify the Training Manager for a second opinion giving full account of the incident. The Training Manager reviews students' completed work to check for plagiarism and cheating. The Training Manager will counsel the student who has been identified as either plagiarising or cheating. The Training Manager will make the decision of the consequences of proven acts of plagiarising or cheating.

Any students who have been identified as alleged plagiariser or cheater will have the ability to access the VIA Education's *Complaints and Appeal Policy and Procedure* at no cost to themselves.

Referencing in Assessments

The purpose of referencing is that credit is given to the author or artist of the work and an acknowledgement is made that the person using that work made no contribution to that work.

The purpose of referencing for assessment purposes is that the assessor is able to distinguish student's work from others and is able to mark assessments appropriately.

Students can use the *APA Style of Referencing* where references are required and include these at the end of their reports in the 'Reference List' or similar section.

For more information on APA style of referencing, please visit <http://www.apastyle.org>

The style and examples of most popular sources are given below



Books (Print or online)

Single Author

Author Last Name, A. (year). *Title of work*. Location: Publisher

Example: Smith, A. (2006). *How to Communicate*. Sydney: Tom's Word Press.

Multiple Authors

Author Last Name, A., Author Last Name, B. (year). *Title of work*. Location: Publisher

Example: Smith, A., Grant, B. (2006). *How to Communicate*. Sydney: Tom's Word Press.

Journals or News Paper Articles

Author, A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (year). Article title. *Journal Title*, volume number (issue number), page numbers.

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (year). *Journal Title*, volume number (issue number), page numbers. Retrieved from <http://www.website.com>

Example: T, M. (2016). *Communicate Effectively*, 1 (12), 50-62.

Websites

Title of work. (year). Retrieved month day, year, from <http://www.website.com>

Example: *Communication*. (2018). Retrieved June 17, 2018, from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communication>

Legislations

Title of the Act Year (Jurisdiction abbreviation)

Example: *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth)

Built-in features of Microsoft Word or other word processing programs can also be used.

Qualification Issuance Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

On successfully completing a qualification, graduates will receive certification documentation issued by VIA Education. Students who complete only some of the requirements for a qualification are entitled to receive a Statement of Attainment.

Certification documentation will be issued within 30 calendar days of the student

- being assessed as competent and meeting all the requirements of the qualification the student is enrolled in; and
- providing that there are no outstanding fees owed by the student to VIA Education; and

- providing that student has given their Unique Student Identifier (USI) to VIA Education.

Certification documentation and interim transcripts will not be issued if student has outstanding fees.

Certification documentation will be issued directly to the student and not to any other party.

Definitions

Certification documents are the official documents that confirms that an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualification (testamur and transcript of results) or statement of attainment has been issued to an individual.

A testamur is official certification document, issued by VIA Education as an authorised issuing organisation, that confirms that a qualification has been awarded to an individual

A transcript of results is a printed record of the units accompanying the testamur.

A statement of attainment is issued when the requirements for a full qualification have not been met, but that one or more units of competency from an accredited qualification have been achieved.

An interim transcript of results can be issued upon request, at any time during the course and is a progressive record of the units a student has studied to date, and it includes both competent and not competent units.

Certification Documentation Protocols

Qualification certification form and content

Qualification certification documents issued will include the following required elements:

- legal name, trading name, RTO code and logo of VIA Education as an authorised issuing organisation
- full name and identification number of person being issued the qualification
- full qualification code and title
- unique issuance number
- date issued
- signature, name and title of person(s) authorised to issue the document
- the statement “The qualification certified herein is recognised within the Australian Qualifications Framework” or AQF Logo
- VIA Education’s unique seal

- Nationally Recognised Training logo.

Statement of Attainment form and content

A statement of attainment can be issued to recognise achievement of part of a qualification, such as one or more units of competency.

Statements of attainment will include the following required elements:

- legal name, trading name, RTO Code and logo of VIA Education as an authorised issuing organisation
- The statement "A Statement of Attainment is issued by a Registered Training Organisation when an individual has completed one or more units of competency from a nationally recognised qualification"
- the statement "This is a statement that <full name of the person being issued the Statement> has attained <units of competency>. These competencies form part of <name of course of study, including the code>"
- unique issuance number
- date issued
- signature, name and title of the person(s) authorised to issue the document
- Nationally Recognised Training logo

Replacement or re-issue of certification documentation

Any replacement or re-issue of certification documentation will include:

- all of the required elements listed above for certification documentation or statement of attainment
- for replacement certificates - a label to indicate that it is a replacement of the original and the date on which the replacement certificate is issued.

Transcript of results required form and content

Transcript of results will include the following features:

- legal name, trading name, RTO code, and logo of VIA Education
- the title "Transcript of Results"
- full name and identification number of the person receiving the transcript
- date issued
- full qualification title and code in which the individual is/was enrolled
- list of units including the code and title for each, and competent result for each

- signature, name and title of the person(s) authorised to issue the document

Issuance Procedure

The Training Manager (or their delegate) prints a report of completing students at the end of each block once results are finalized for that block.

Students requesting a replacement or re-issue of certificate must complete the *Certificate Replacement-Reissuance Request Form*.

The Training Manager (or their delegate) prints *Certificate Request Form* for each student eligible to receive either full qualification or statement of attainment and submit these forms to the Student Services Manager who will:

- complete fee check and inform students of their outstanding fees (if any); and
- check any outstanding process records in Student Management System and make updates (if any)

Student Services Manager passes processed forms to the Training Manager who will:

- check unit results recorded in in Student Management System
- check whether a USI has been recorded in the Student Management System
- check whether records of *Unit of Competency Records Sheets* are available in Student Management System
- check any outstanding process records in Student Management System and make updates (if any)
- confirm the type of documents (full qualification or statement of attainment) student is eligible to receive

After checking is completed, the Training Manager requests the number of testamur paper from the RTO Manager who is authorised to keep the stock of these papers. The RTO Manager, upon issuing the testamur paper to the Training Manager, updates *Certificate Paper Stocktake Register* noting the number and date issued.

The Training Manager prints the applicable documentation from the Student Management System.

The certification documentation is then received, checked and signed by the RTO Manager and the Chief Executive Officer.

The RTO Manager updates the *Certificate Paper Stocktake Register* noting the student id and certificate number.

Signed documents are returned to the Training Manager who will

- record the issuance in the Qualifications Issuance Register
- place the VIA Education's unique seal on testamurs
- pass them on to the student services staff

Upon receiving the certification documentation from the Training Manager, student services staff will:

- retain a copy in student file and in the Student Management System
- notify students to collect the certification documentation
- remind students to acknowledge the pickup by signing the *Certificate Request Form* or the *Certificate Replacement-Reissuance Request Form*.

Fraudulent Qualification Prevention Statement

The creation of fraudulent qualifications is a significant risk for the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector. At a minimum, VIA Education includes the RTO's seal on the testamurs.

VIA Education also take steps to reduce the chance of fraudulent qualifications by:

- Not allowing third parties to create qualifications or statements of attainment on its behalf.
- The stationery used for certificates and seal labels are locked in CEO's or their delegate's office and only they (either CEO or the delegate) have access to these.
- Only the CEO and their delegate are authorised to develop and/or amended the testamur, statement of attainment or transcript of results templates.
- Student files are locked in a filing cabinet and the files are only accessible by authorised staff.
- All testamurs and statements of attainment will have unique issuance number (document id)
- All testamurs, statements of attainment and transcripts of results issued are signed by the CEO and the RTO Manager as the authorised signatory.
- The CEO and the RTO Manager signs testamurs and statements of attainment after only after USI, fees and academic checks are completed.
- In the absence of the CEO, only delegated authority should sign testamurs, statements of attainment and transcript of results as the secondary authorised signatory.

- VIA Education keeps copies of testamurs, statements of attainment and transcript of results in student files and Student Management System.

The eLearning Portal

VIA Education provides a student eLearning portal. The portal is designed to hold additional learning support material to assist you with your studies. For each unit that you are enrolled to study, you will find electronic copies of the printed material provided to you in class, copies of the PowerPoint presentations that your trainer will be using, links to up-to-date websites, further reading material, and streaming video content to help your broader understanding of the topic area.

Note that the portal will not replace your attendance in the classroom. Rather, it is designed to deepen your understanding of each topic.

Your trainer may distribute additional learning material through the portal as your unit progresses.

How to access the VIA eLearning portal

To access the eLearning portal, you will need a desktop or laptop computer, a tablet device, or a mobile phone with a screen large enough for comfortably reading text material. All major browsers are supported.

On your device, open a browser window and go to the following address:

www.elearning.via.edu.au

You will need to enter your student ID as your username, and the password you were provided with at orientation.

If you have any difficulties in accessing the portal, please send an email to Student Services at info@via.edu.au or see the reception for assistance.

IT Facilities and Printing Facilities on campus

VIA Education provides lab computers and Chromebooks to students to access Internet and additional learning resources to help you do your studies more effectively and efficiently.

Before granted access to the IT and printing facilities on campus, you are required to accept and acknowledge your acceptance to abide our IT Facilities and Internet Usage policy. The policy will be made available to you at your orientation session.

Library Facilities

Whilst we provide learning materials such as learner guides, workbooks, PowerPoint presentations, and access to streaming video material, you may like to have access to additional library material to help you in your studies. There is an independent learning room available at VIA Education campus for student's use.

The City of Sydney has nine library branches across Sydney, with the closest being a short 6 minute walk from our campus at 744 George Street — right next to the Light Rail stop.

The library has many services, including PC and Internet access, library and reference books, database access, and meeting facilities. There are many books available to support your studies, some of which are listed at the end of your learner guides.

The library is free to use, and the City of Sydney welcomes international students as members while they reside within New South Wales. Membership is free.

Additionally, the library runs tours Monday to Friday especially for international students at the Customs House branch. For more information visit cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/explore/libraries.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Attendance

To ensure that you are making satisfactory course progress it is important that you attend all of your scheduled classes. If you do not attend regularly, you may miss important information or assessment events.

You must complete training and learning activities prior to assessment to achieve the required competencies. If you are not attending classes and also the required learning activities but achieving competencies, your course duration may be reassessed and as a result your student visa may be affected.

Overseas students on student visas:

- must study full-time (20 scheduled course contact hours per week) and complete all training, learning and assessment activities to enable you to complete your course successfully within the course duration as specified in your Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).
- must participate in all scheduled classes in accordance with the course timetables and complete all required assessments to make satisfactory course progress and if you don't satisfactorily progress in your enrolled course(s) you will be in breach of your student visa condition.
- must maintain full-time enrolment to comply with your student visa conditions or else your student visa may be cancelled by the Immigration department

If you require a period of approved leave due to extended illness or other exceptional circumstances, you should contact us to request approved leave. Please note that if you are absent, even with a medical certificate, your attendance will continue to fall unless you are on Approved Leave.

Punctuality

Please arrive on time for the start of your class and return immediately after breaks. If you arrive more than 15 minutes after the scheduled class start time you may be marked absent for part of the class.

Student Visa Requirements

Overseas students on student visas must comply with the student visa requirements. As an education provider we are required to report students failing to comply with their student visa conditions to the Immigration department.

Harassment

In Australia, you cannot be harassed sexually or based on your gender, pregnancy, marital, race or religion, disability, age or sexuality. If you feel that someone within VIA Education has discriminated against you please report it using our Complaints and Appeals form. All investigations will be treated as confidential unless you request otherwise.

If a satisfactory solution cannot be reached you may contact the Anti-Discrimination Board of New South Wales.

Health and Safety

VIA Education is committed to the implementation of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*, and other associated health and safety legislation. Everyone in the VIA Education community, including all students and staff, are responsible for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of everyone else in the Academy.

Drugs and Alcohol

VIA Education has a zero-tolerance policy for alcohol and drugs on campus.

Any student suspected of, or displaying signs of being under the influence of, alcohol or drugs will be asked to leave the premises. A counselling session will take place between the student and a senior member of staff. Repeated misconduct may result in cancellation of the student's enrolment.

STUDENT SUPPORT

VIA Education provides a range of support services to ensure your time with us is as enjoyable and rewarding as possible.

Accommodation

Homestay is a great way to live as part of an Australian family. We can arrange for you to live with a Homestay family during your time in Australia. Please let us know at the time of your enrolment.

For other accommodation options, you may access websites including stayz.com.au or domain.com.au.

Orientation Session

On your first day please see Student Services staff to register before going to class. You will also need to attend an orientation session. It is essential you attend orientation to receive important information and forms.

Counselling

Is there is something we can help you with? We can support you with a range of information and counselling on a wide range of issues, including:

- Accommodation and homestay
- Academic progress and further study opportunities
- Meeting your visa requirements
- Finding legal, health and medical services
- External counselling services for mediation and mental health issues

Please see our Student Services staff to book an appointment.

English and Academic Support

If you are finding your studies too difficult or are struggling with English in the classroom it is important to let us know as soon as possible so that we can help you. Make an appointment at reception to speak with our student support staff about the options that may be available to you.

It may be possible to defer your studies to do an intensive English course, to re-attempt an assessment that you didn't successfully complete, or re-enrol in classes that you may have struggled in.

If you have any special needs that will help during your time with us please let us know after your orientation session. Alternatively, please speak with our student support staff by making an appointment at reception.

Healthcare providers

If you are on a student visa you must hold an approved Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) policy for the full duration of your stay in Australia. This will cover many types of medical services you may require while in Australia.

In Australia you will usually visit a General Practitioner (GP) for most types of non-life-threatening medical conditions. GPs are a type of Doctor and may be found in medical centres across Sydney. Some medical centres offer 24-hour support.

In emergency situations you should go directly to a hospital for assessment and treatment.

Other support providers

The following are not affiliated with VIA Education but may be useful to know while you are completing your studies.

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency call 000 (zero-zero-zero) from any telephone. This emergency line will put you through to Police, the Fire Brigade or the Ambulance service.

Lifeline

Lifeline provides crisis support, suicide prevention and mental health support services across Australia. These can include stresses from work, family or society and physical and mental wellbeing. Call 13 11 14 for Lifeline.

Legal

Legal Aid NSW provides free legal advice via the Law Access NSW help line on 1300 888 529.



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Workplace

For information about pay and work conditions for international students see www.fairwork.gov.au/employment/international-students/pages/default.aspx.

If you believe you are not being treated fairly by your employer you can contact the workplace ombudsman for help, via www.fairwork.gov.au or by calling the Fair Work Ombudsman Help Line on 13 13 94.

LIVING IN SYDNEY

Public Transport

Sydney has recently rolled out a new public transport ticketing system which makes it easy to get around the city. The Opal card is a special ticketing card that can be used on trains, buses and ferries. For more information see www.opal.com.au

Please note that at present there are no discounts available to international students when purchasing public transport tickets.

For general information on Sydney's public transport network, or to plan a trip, see www.transportnsw.info

Trains

The train stations closest to VIA Education are Town Hall Station, and Central Station. If you are not using an Opal card you will need to purchase a ticket at the station before boarding a train.

Buses

Most buses require purchasing a ticket before boarding or using an Opal card. Bus tickets are available from newsagents and convenience stores, or see www.opal.com.au

Working while studying

If you are on a student visa you may be entitled to work for up to 40 hours per fortnight once you commence your course, and unlimited hours during scheduled course holidays. For further information contact the Immigration department.

Tax File Number

All employees require a Tax File Number from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). For further information see www.ato.gov.au

Banks

You will most likely want to open a bank account once you arrive in Sydney. To do this you will need several forms of identification, including your passport.

Australia's four major banks are:

- Commonwealth Bank of Australia



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- Westpac Banking Corporation
- NAB (National Australia Bank)
- ANZ (Australia and New Zealand Bank)

There are other smaller banks that are available as well.

Entertainment

Shopping

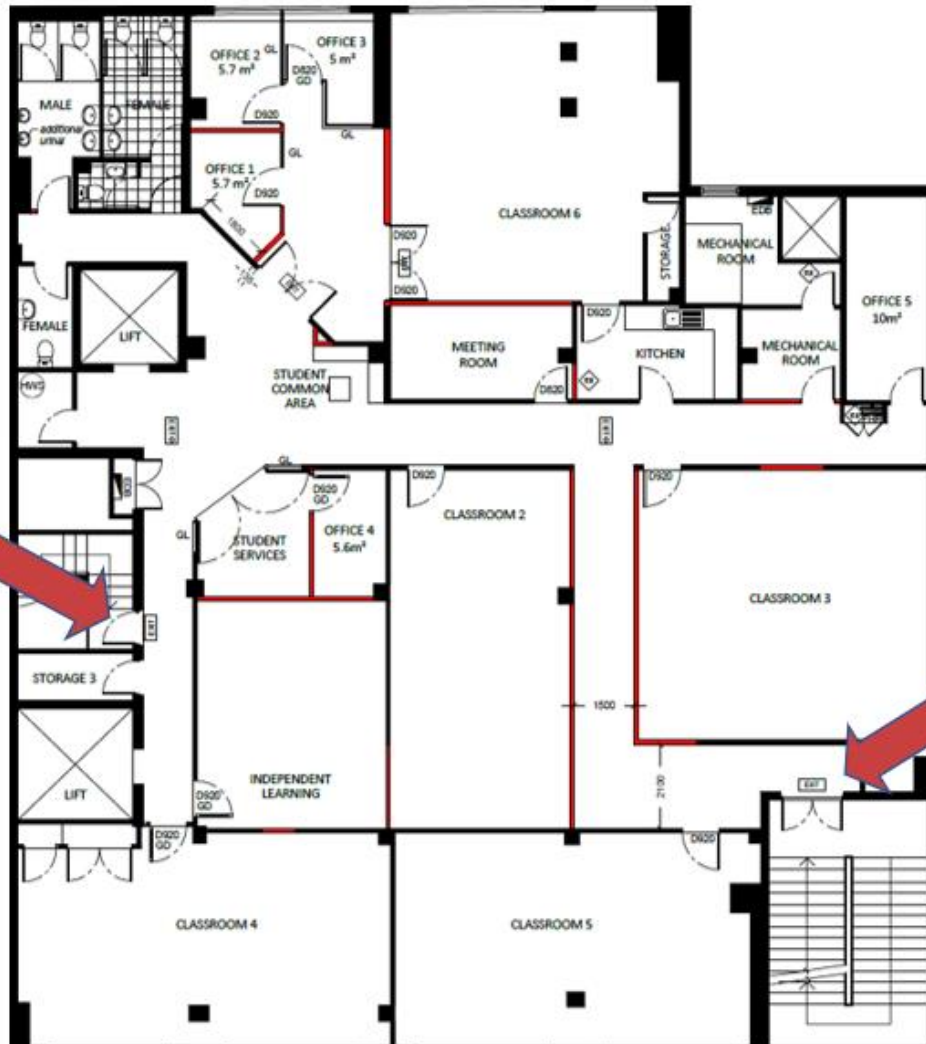
VIA Education is within walking distance to World Square and Market City. World Square is a large shopping and commercial complex with a vast range of eateries and takeaway food options. Market City, located in Sydney's famous Chinatown district, has a range of retail shops and a large food court. On Wednesdays to Sundays Paddy's Markets at Haymarket opens in the basement of the Market City complex.

Events

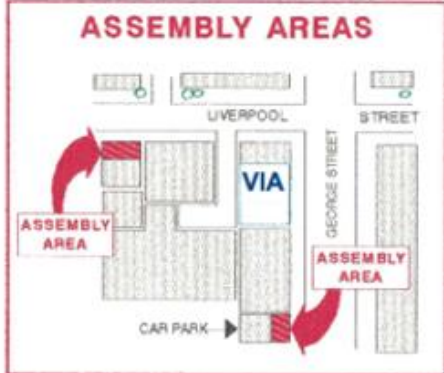
Sydney City is a busy metropolis filled with so many venues and events that it may be difficult to know where to start! A great place for finding out what's available around VIA Education is the City of Sydney website at www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/explore which is run by Sydney City Council.

For even more information on what's on around Sydney see www.whatsonsydney.com.

Level 5, 565 George Street – Floor plan & Emergency Exits



EMERGENCY
 In the event of an emergency, notify nearest member of staff



Emergency Exit