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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy and related procedure is to support Overseas students to adjust to study and life in Australia, to achieve their learning goals and to achieve satisfactory progress towards meeting the learning outcomes of the course. It is also to support domestic students to achieve their learning goals and to achieve satisfactory progress towards meeting the learning outcomes of the course.

2. SCOPE

This policy/procedure applies to all student operations of Acumen Education whether Overseas or domestic.

3. POLICY

This policy/procedure supports ‘Standard 6 – Student Support Services’ of the ‘National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities & Providers of Education & Training to Overseas Students 2018’ which states:

“Registered providers support students to adjust to study and life in Australia, to achieve their learning goals and to achieve satisfactory progress towards meeting the learning outcomes of the course.”

AND

This policy supports Standard 1 Clause 1.3 section b, d and Clause 1.7

This policy also supports Clause 1.7 of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015.

This policy ensures that all students are given support while studying in Australia. This includes both academic and personal support and the following procedures ensure that students are made aware of the support available. Acumen will also conduct an orientation program for all new students and the details of this orientation program are included in the procedures outlined below.

4. DEFINITIONS

Academic Counselling	Study skills, time management and other information relevant to enhancing academic performance for enrolled students.
Course Advice	Provision of advice by Acumen staff to students on how to make an appropriate program and/or career choice.
Currently Enrolled	A person who has been admitted to an accredited program of study, has not completed

Student	that program and has registered into classes which occur in the current term.
Personal Counselling	Assisting enrolled students and recent graduates to manage themselves and deal with issues of a personal, family and/or psychological nature.
Program Information	This includes details of programs, student services and educational services.

5. NOMINATED SSO & LIST OF SUPPORT SERVICES

Whilst all staff employed by Acumen has the responsibility to provide support to all students, Acumen shall nominate a ‘SSO’ (Student Support Officer) who shall be available to all students, on an appointment basis, through the standard Acumen hours of business and will be equipped with up-to-date details of the support services provided at Acumen.

Students can access the SSO directly or via student administrations and an appointment will be organised as soon as practical.

All student support services are at no additional cost to the students.

The following support services are available and accessible for all students studying at Acumen. Acumen provides students with contact details to refer any matters that require further follow up with qualified professionals. Any referrals are conducted by Acumen at no cost to the student, but fees and charges may apply where an external service is used by the student. The service fees and charges should be clarified by the student prior to using any services outside of Acumen.

Acumen assists students to adjust to study and life in Australia, including through the provision of an age and culturally appropriate orientation program that includes information about:

Student support services available to students in the transition to life and study in a new environment.

- Legal services.
- Academic issues
- Personal and Social issues
- Accommodation
- Medical Issues
- Social Programs
- Emergency and health services.
- Facilities and resources.
- Complaints and appeals processes.
- Any student visa condition relating to course progress and/or attendance as appropriate.

Academic issues

Students may have concerns with their attendance, academic performance or other related issues that are placing them at risk of not achieving the requirements of their course. Students are able to gain advice and support in ensuring they maintain appropriate academic progress, attendance levels and general support to ensure they achieve satisfactory results in their studies. All students' progress and attendance is monitored and guidance and support provided where non satisfactory results are identified. A student is able to access the SSO to discuss any academic, attendance, or other related issues to studying at the Acumen at any time. The SSO will be able to provide advice and guidance, or referral, where required. There is no additional charge for this service.

Personal and Social issues

There are many issues that may affect a student's social or personal life and students have access to the SSO through normal college hours to gain advice and guidance on personal issues, accommodation issues, or family / friend issues. Where the SSO feels further support should be gained, a referral to an appropriate support service will be organised.

Referral Services Available Name & Location

Counselling service Lifeline 13 11 44

These details are also present in the Student Handbook and pre-arrival guide. Acumen will not charge for a referral.

Accommodation

Acumen Education will provide the chance for students to access welfare related support services to assist with issues that may arise during their study, including accommodation issues.

While Acumen does not offer accommodation services or take any responsibility for accommodation arrangements, the SSO of the Acumen is able to refer students to appropriate accommodation services and is always available to discuss any issues or concerns a student may have with their accommodation arrangements. All students are encouraged to have accommodation organised prior to arrival in Australia but the SSO can refer students to appropriate accommodation services. Details about accommodation can be obtained from the Student Hand book and pre-arrival guide. Acumen will not charge for a referral.

More welfare support options can be accessed from the Australian govt website -
<https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/English/student-support>

Throughout the pandemic, the Australian govt has been sharing information that can be accessed by Overseas students on this website, like –

- Latest information and updates on Overseas travel during the pandemic
- Financial support that is available for students during the pandemic and how to access the support
- Education and provider support
- Student health and wellbeing

Medical Issues

SSO will always have an up to date list of medical professionals within access from the college location and any student with medical concerns should inform the SSO who will assist them in finding an appropriate medical professional.

Local medical services are as follows:

- 1) Alfred Hospital Commercial Rd (Corner St Kilda Rd) 9276 2000
 - 2) Nurse-on-Call Telephone health line, providing immediate, expert health information and advice 24 hours a day 7 days a week - 1300 60 60 24
 - 3) Royal Melbourne Hospital - 9342 7000
 - 4) Royal Women's Hospital - 9344 2000
 - 5) St Vincent's Hospital - 9288 2211
- Emergency Help Australian Health Management 24-hour - 1800 006 745

The emergency phone number for an ambulance in Australia is '000'. (This number should only be dialled in an emergency and you require ambulance, police, or fire attendance.) Acumen will not charge for a referral.

Legal Services

The Acumen is able to provide some advice and guidance on a limited range of situations. Where the SSO feels it appropriate for you to gain professional legal advice they will refer you to an appropriate legal professional.

Names and contact details for free legal advice and a lawyer is provided in Acumen Student Handbook and pre-arrival guide. Acumen will not charge for a referral.

Language, Literacy and Numeracy Support

If a student is found to need additional literacy and numeracy (LLN) support and they were not identified at the time of their application then special LLN classes may be set up as needed. This may incur an additional fee. If the LLN deficiency clearly inhibits the student's ability to complete their course, then they may be advised to defer their course and to enrol on a suitable English course and then resume.

If Acumen cannot provide the course then the student will be referred to an organization who can assist in improving their skills. On attaining proficiency, they may then resume or reapply to Acumen.

Reasonable Adjustment

The Disability Discrimination Act uses the principle of reasonable adjustment, which is also called reasonable accommodation, to ensure that people with disabilities are treated equally. This means that 'reasonable' adjustments must be made wherever possible; to meet the needs of a Student with a disability.

At Acumen we can do the following to assist with your requirements for reasonable adjustment:

- Make training and assessment materials and methods more accessible.
- Training and assessment methods that suit most students may hinder access for some students with a disability. Acumen is able to present information through a range of methods to assist students with a disability.
- Adapt the physical environment and equipment to better suit the student with disability.

Students requiring reasonable adjustment, should speak to their Trainer or the SSO in the first instance

6. STUDENT ORIENTATION PROGRAM

A free orientation program is conducted before Institute's classes begin in consideration of the following:

- Student's privacy and confidentiality as per the Privacy Act.
- Cultural sensitivities considered to prevent offence to the students, their families or any of their representatives, for example education agents.

Attendance is compulsory for all Overseas and domestic students. The program includes an introduction to Acumen, its services and facilities as well as an introduction to Australian culture, society and life. Students are also introduced to the academic culture and rules of the Institute that are necessary for successful study.

The orientation program also involves social activities, which will help you to meet other students and familiarize yourself with the Institute and surrounds.

Apart from the Student Orientation Program the SSO will occasionally organise social events that allow all students enrolled with Acumen to mingle and socialise. These events may range from cultural and sightseeing events, to dinners, excursions and sporting events. They will be organised as demand requires and any suggestions can be forwarded to the SSO.

This orientation program is managed by the SSO and includes the following:

- A tour of the Acumen identifying classrooms, student areas, student administration area, and any other relevant areas within the Acumen such as toilets, fire exits, and restricted areas.
- All students are to receive a copy of the Student handbook.
- support services available to assist overseas students to help them adjust to study and life in Australia
- English language and study assistance programs
- any relevant legal services
- emergency and health services
- the registered provider's facilities and resources
- complaints and appeals processes as outlined in Standard 10 (Complaints and appeals)
- requirements for course attendance and progress, as appropriate
- the support services available to assist students with general or personal circumstances that are adversely affecting their education in Australia
- services students can access for information on their employment rights and conditions, and how to resolve workplace issues, such as through the Fair Work Ombudsman.

7. COMPULSORY ORIENTATION

New students at Acumen education benefit from opportunities to become familiar including the academic and support services provided by acumen education.

Along with general orientation activities, new students may have particular needs or issues requiring specific support and interventions. At Acumen education, it is mandatory for new students to complete the Pre-enrolment student feedback form.

New students also complete a compulsory component of Orientation Online so that essential elements such as academic integrity are understood prior to commencing study.

Recommended Orientation and Transition Activities

It is acknowledged that the first year of learning can present challenges to all new learners, particularly those students from backgrounds in which Overseas education might not be a typical path. Regardless of the campus, Acumen education provides structured orientation courses to cater to the diverse needs of learners who may be at different stages of preparedness for study at acumen education. These experiences ensure new students have opportunities to:

- Identify and meet key academic, support and other relevant campus staff to build connections within acumen education
- Be introduced to Acumen education’s Learning Management System and understand how it is used to support students
- Familiarise themselves with academic and support services that will assist with the development of successful study and learning habits
- Develop a sense of belonging to acumen education

Acumen education aims to deliver a consistent standard of orientation content across campuses and delivery sites.

Orientation Online provides information for new students and practice opportunities to use features of the Learning Management System prior to commencement of studies. Orientation Online is also a resource for students to refer back to during their first two terms of study because transition is an ongoing process.

8. SUPPORT MATRIX

- 1 Student support is provided by a number of different staff and all staff are required to support the students wherever possible. Many issues are best handled as soon as possible. Simple requests such as “how to open a bank account” can be answered by anyone and should be. On the other hand, managing a family crisis at home whilst trying to study would require professional counselling support.

- 2 Any member of staff will try to help and if necessary will arrange the student to meet the right person. If you need external counselling or support, Acumen will arrange this through the SSO.

Service	Academic Staff	Admin manager	SSO	Operations manager	External Agencies ¹	CEO
Informal	?	?	?	?		?
General Information regarding Acumen	?	?	?	?		?
“How to” in Australia	?	?	?	?		?
Course Information	?	?	?			?
Course Progress	?	?	?			?
Finances		?		?		?
Language, Literacy or Numeracy	?	?	?			?
Complaints / Appeals	?	?	?			?
Counselling – personal issues			?		?	?
Legal					?	
Accommodation			?		?	?

9. SSO DUTIES

Acumen ensures that the staff members who interact directly with students are aware of the obligations of Acumen under the ESOS framework and the potential implications for students arising from the exercise of these obligations. This information is communicated to staff through inclusion in Staff meetings, and through inclusion in the policies on the Acumens intranet (www.teamworks.com.au) and in the Staff Handbook.

All students will have unlimited access to our student support services through our SSO and shall have access to available student welfare services available locally.

- Where the nature of the concern is beyond the SSO’s experience and abilities, the student shall be referred to an appropriate person for professional assistance.
- The SSO shall respond to all questions pertaining to the student’s progress, course requirements, satisfactory progress and/or attendance, and refer the student to other staff members as appropriate.

- The SSO shall assist with accommodation or general welfare issues, through providing appropriate advice and direction.
- The SSO is authorized to refer the student to professional welfare assistance (Social Workers, Legal Aid, etc.) as they see fit
- The SSO shall detail the student support services provided to each student, and ensure details of services provided are placed on the student’s file.
- The Course coordinator shall ensure that the Student Support Services are reviewed quarterly in management meetings, and corrective actions are applied as appropriate

Sufficient Resources to provide the service

The topics to be covered by Student Support are wide and varied. Many tasks can be handled by SSOs, whilst others are provided by specialists. Acumen monitors the time allocated by staff members currently to project the requirements for the future. Bases on the number of student currently enrolled and the projected numbers for the next term of studies the number of SSO’s are recruited.

External Student Support Services Referral List

Support	Website	Phoneno.
Emergency–Police, Fire, Ambulance		000
Alcohol and Drug Foundation	www.adf.org.au	1300858584
Anxiety Support	www.beyondblue.org.au	1300224636
Accommodation	http://melbourne.gumtree.com.au http://www.domain.com.au http://www.realestate.com.au	
Asthma	www.asthmaustralia.org.au	1800278462
Crime stoppers Victoria	www.crimestoppers.vic.com.au	1800333000
Consumer Affairs Victoria–Overseas Students	www.consumer.vic.gov.au/internationalstudents	1300558181
Depression (National Initiative)	www.beyondblue.org.au	1300224636
Department of Health and Human Services (Melbourne CBD Office)	www.dhhs.vic.gov.au	1300650172

Department of Home Affairs	www.homeaffairs.gov.au	131881
Disabilities	www.ideas.org.au	1800029904
Domestic violence	www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au	1800737732
Epilepsy	www.epilepsy.org.au	1300374537
Gambling Helpline	www.gamblinghelponline.org.au	1800858858
Grief support	www.solace.org.au	53311344
Lifeline	www.lifeline.org.au	131144
Melbourne Water	www.melbournewater.com.au	131722
National Accreditation Authority for Translators and interpreters	www.naati.com.au/	0396423301
Overseas Students Ombudsman	www.ombudsman.gov.au	1300362072
Study Melbourne Student Centre (SMSC)	www.studymelbourne.vic.gov.au	1800056449
Telephone Interpreter Service	www.tisnational.gov.au/	131450