

# Student Welfare, Wellbeing and Support Policy and Procedure

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| <b>Supporting plans, policies and procedures</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Orientation Policy and Procedure</li> <li>• Student Handbooks</li> <li>• Student Orientation Policy and Procedure</li> <li>• Equity, Diversity and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Framework and Policy</li> <li>• Critical Incidents and Business Continuity Policy and Procedure</li> <li>• Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination Policy and Procedure</li> <li>• Health and Safety Policy and Procedure</li> <li>• Academic Progress and Student At-Risk Policy and Procedure</li> <li>• Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure</li> <li>• Privacy Policy</li> </ul> |
| <b>Related Legislation and documents</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021</li> <li>• Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2011</li> <li>• Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)</li> <li>• National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Version</b>                                   | 3.2  |
| <b>Approved by</b>                               | Academic Board and Board of Directors  |
| <b>Date approved</b>                             | 07 December 2023   |
| <b>Document review</b>                           | This document is to be reviewed every two-years at a minimum from the date of final approval   |

| <b>Version</b> | <b>Review Date and Person/Body</b>  | <b>Notes</b>  |
|----------------|---|---|
| 0.1            | Developed and reviewed by the Learning and Teaching Committee in May and June 2020                        |   |
| 1.0            | Presented to 2 July 2020 Academic Board meeting for review and approval                                   |   |
| 2.0            | Approved by the Academic Board on 2 July 2020   | Final version with AB clarification incorporated                                      |
| 2.1            | Reviewed and approved at 20 October 2020 Academic Board meeting   | Minor amendments following comments from external reviewers                           |
| 3.0            | Reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors and Academic Board via email circulation on 23 July 2021  | Updates made following the response to the TEQSA Request for Information 23 July 2021 |
| 3.1            | Reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors and Academic Board via email circulation on 11 March 2022 | Minor grammatical and structural changes made   |
| 3.2            | Reviewed and approved by the Academic Board and. Board of Directors 07 December 2023                      | Minor update on the reporting and link updated  |

## Background and Scope

MIHE is committed to providing a range of welfare and support services in a variety of modes to all MIHE students. Student welfare and support services commence prior to the formal orientation period and continue throughout the student's course of study.

MIHE will ensure that all students have access to appropriate welfare and support services and information as and when required. This document aims to assist the transition of all commencing and continuing students both domestic and international, to study, work, and life in Australia.

This Policy and Procedure applies to all MIHE students and staff in accordance with the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act and National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (National Code), and the requirements of the Department of Home Affairs. The services covered under this Policy and Procedure include the provision of counselling, advice and support regarding academic performance and student welfare. To this end MIHE will provide a Student Welfare and Support Officer with responsibilities as outlined below. In addition, the Student Welfare and Support Officer will be the official point of contact for international students.

This Policy and Procedure must be communicated to students to ensure that they understand what support services MIHE provides to them directly or indirectly and identifies other relevant services that are available. Students' awareness and understanding of this procedure must be complemented by all staff having appropriate training so that they can comply with MIHE's obligations with regards to the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021, Education Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS Act) and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (National Code).

## Definitions

Refer to the Glossary of Terms.

## Policy

MIHE recognises the diversity of student learning needs and is committed to the welfare of all students. This policy enacts the standards and requirements of the National Code 2018 Standard 6.

- In order to assist students in achieving their learning goals and to make satisfactory progress towards the learning outcomes of their course, MIHE provides support to students and provides reference to other services so that they can adjust to study and life in Australia.

- On arrival at MIHE, students must attend a compulsory orientation program that provides key information about study, work, and life in Australia (for details of the orientation program see *Student Orientation Policy and Procedure*).
- MIHE students are also able to access services or participate in workshops that help them to meet course requirements and maintain attendance.
- MIHE students facing issues such as course progress, attendance requirements and accommodation issues may access free welfare/academic-related support services and if external support services are required, MIHE will make these services available without cost to the student.
- MIHE's *Critical Incidents and Business Continuity Policy and Procedure* ensures that students and their family are appropriately dealt with when a critical incident occurs that could affect a domestic or overseas student's ability to undertake or complete a course. This includes procedures to address specific incidents, appropriate follow up, and record keeping and actions to be taken.
- Student Welfare and Support Officer is appointed by MIHE to be an official point of contact for students who will be the official point of contact for international students. The appointed staff will ensure they have the most current detail of MIHE's support services.
- MIHE will ensure that there are staff to respond to the support needs of the students enrolled. In addition to the Student Welfare and Support Officer, all staff that deal directly with students will be trained and made aware of the ESOS framework and its obligations as well as the possible implications for students based on these obligations. MIHE holds a current [ISANA](#) membership to train its staff about their responsibilities under ESOS Act. All staff are required to successfully complete this training prior to engaging with international students.
- MIHE provides:
  - Academic/Welfare support which includes but is not limited to study advice, language assistance, attendance and meeting course requirements;
  - Welfare support which includes but is not limited to emergency, legal, and health services as well as referrals to external providers;
  - Information and advice on complaints and appeals policies and procedures;
  - Regularly reviews and updates to support services so that students have correct and up-to-date information.
  - Staff the opportunity to attend [ISANA](#) webinars, seminars, tutorials, and other activities to understand their obligations under Education Services for Overseas

Students (ESOS) Act and National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018. All staff needs to complete successfully the training prior to engaging with international students. Ultimately this provides support to students through this training.

## **Student Welfare, Wellbeing and Support Provided**

MIHE is committed to providing a supportive learning environment for all commencing and existing domestic and international students transitioning to a new culture and life in Australia. The following services and resources will be provided to students.

### **Arrival in Australia**

MIHE can provide advice and, if possible, assistance to international students with transport on arrival to Australia. International students are provided with information regarding accommodation, arrival procedures and adapting to life in Australia.

### **Orientation Program**

All students must attend an orientation program as part of their first week at MIHE. Students will be informed of the:

- support services available to assist them to adjust to study and life in Australia,
- English language and study assistance programs
- legal services, emergency and health services
- MIHE facilities and resources
- Complaints and appeals processes,
- Requirements for course attendance and progress
- Support services available to assist students with general or personal circumstance that may adversely affect their education
- Services students can access for information on their employment rights and conditions and how to resolve workplace issues.

Details of this program can be found in the *Student Orientation Policy and Procedure*. A signed record of a student's attendance and participation in the orientation program, in the form of an induction checklist, are kept on each student's file.

### **Student Handbooks**

A student handbook (International/Domestic) is provided to each student (or student can access through MIHE website) in their first week at MIHE outlining current information for students on support services, policies and procedures. The handbooks contains the following information:

- Services, facilities and resources available to students

- Visa requirements for international students
- Policies and Procedures ([Policy and Procedure – Melbourne Institute of Higher Education Pty Ltd \(mihe.vic.edu.au\)](http://mihe.vic.edu.au))
- Other relevant information in assisting students to adjust to life and study in Australia

### Student Services Support

Students can make enquiries at Reception during office hours or approach members of staff for general enquiries. For student support enquiries, students can be seen by the designated Student Services team member. There are also other staff members available to support students. Their contact details are available in the student handbook (international/domestic).

### Academic, Language and Learning Support

MIHE will provide academic, language and learning support to assist students with their academic progress. Students identified as not progressing satisfactorily in their studies should take advantage of MIHE’s academic or English language support.

- Students are encouraged to ask their lecturers for help in meeting course requirements.
- Lecturers are primarily responsible for providing academic support to students.
- Course director will organise the academic support if required.
- Students are encouraged to seek assistance on academic communications skills, academic integrity and referencing, research skills, content revision and time management and exam preparation.
- The Course Director(s)/Dean can also provide advice on general academic issues, timetabling, study skills and learning strategies.
- The Student Welfare and Support Officer will support lecturers, tutors, the Course Director and Dean in providing additional support and attention to students as required.

### Student Welfare Services

The following table details the role of the Student Welfare and Support Officer and other staff in providing advice and/or support to students on welfare related matters:

| Student Services | Welfare | MIHE Student Welfare and Support Officer and other staff  | External agencies (outside of MIHE)                         |
|------------------|---------|---|---|
| Counselling      |         | Advise and assist with academic or personal difficulties. Refer to external counselling services if needed at no cost | Student responsible for any costs with external counselling |
| Legal services   |         | Refer to legal practitioner at no cost  | Student responsible for any costs with legal advice         |
| Accommodation    |         | Advise and assist with identifying options and providers at no cost   | Student responsible for any costs with external providers   |

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| Health                         | Provide information during orientation and advise in regard to non-urgent health services  | In an emergency, student instructed to call 000 and inform MIHE as soon as possible |
| Facilities and resources       | Information provided during MIHE campus tour in accordance with MIHE's orientation program and in the Student Handbooks  |   |
| Safety                         | Provide information during the orientation program in accordance with the Health and Safety Policy and Procedure   | In an emergency, student instructed to call 000 and inform MIHE as soon as possible |
| Complaints and appeals process | Provided on website and in Student Handbooks   |   |
| Visa conditions                | Student requirements outlined during orientation program and in Student Handbooks  |   |
| Work                           | Assistance with resume-writing and job hunting/search<br>Advise on services students can access for information on employment rights and conditions and workplace issue resolution |   |

### Support for Students with Special Needs

If a student self-identifies with a special need, MIHE will assess the student's needs and the Student Welfare and Support Officer will determine what reasonable adjustments can be implemented to assist the student with their study. Special needs support may include (but are not limited to) large print materials, specialised furniture or seating arrangements, extra time for assessments including examinations and oral or sign interpreters.

### Support for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Students

MIHE acknowledges the systemic under representation of **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander** students in higher education and provides equal opportunity of access, participation and advancement to complete their studies. MIHE will arrange free academic workshops for **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander** students to improve their research skills, academic writing skills, exam preparation and time management skills. Academic staff will also be available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students for extra support.

## Critical Incident Management

The MIHE *Critical Incidents and Business Continuity Policy and Procedure* provides for the proper management, recording and follow up on incidents that may affect a student's ability to undertake or complete a course and is not limited to:

- issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse;
- severe verbal or psychological aggression;
- death, serious injury or any threat of these;
- missing students, and;
- natural disaster

For further information, see *Critical Incidents and Business Continuity Policy and Procedure*.

# Student Welfare, Wellbeing and Support Services

## Procedure

The Student Welfare and Support Officer will be the main point of contact for students seeking student support services.

The Student Welfare and Support Officer is responsible for the following aspects of student welfare and support:

- Providing general advice and direction in regard to accommodation or general welfare issues
- Referring students to professional welfare assistance when appropriate
- Recording details of a student's use of support services on the student's file
- Referring all other queries to relevant staff members or professional assistance as required

The Student Welfare and Support Officer will be the main point of contact for students seeking student support services for academic support:

- Lecturers/Unit Coordinators or staff delegated to this role are responsible for monitoring student's academic progress. Course director will organise additional academic support if required.
- Students found not be making sufficient academic progress may be contacted for academic counselling and follow up actions. Any contact or actions taken in regard to this are to be recorded in the student files.

- Lecturers are responsible for reporting to the relevant Course Director any concerns they have about changes in a student's behaviour, attitude, health or general demeanour for immediate follow up.

If a student requires professional counselling and this service is not available on campus, the Student Welfare and Support Officer will provide appropriate referrals. The Student Welfare and Support Officer will not provide professional counselling services unless specifically qualified. The Student Welfare and Support Officer will also be responsible for making a note of this on the student file and following up appropriately with the student and other relevant staff.

Students seeking additional external support can refer to various support services provided by The Victorian Government. For more information on these services, Study Melbourne Hub Vic visit <https://www.studymelbourne.vic.gov.au/study-melbourne-hub>

Free service:

**Phone:** 1800 056 449 (free call from landline phones)

**E-mail:** [info@studymelbourne.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@studymelbourne.vic.gov.au)

**Drop-in to the office:** 17 Hardware Lane, Melbourne, 3000

The Chief Executive Officer with advice from the Dean and Course Director are responsible for ensuring that Student Support Services are regularly reviewed.

### **Privacy and Confidentiality**

MIHE will ensure that the rights of all students to privacy and confidentiality are respected by all staff, including those with special needs or those who seek counselling or advocacy support. Students' personal information will be appropriately secured against unauthorised access or disclosure in accordance with its *Privacy Policy*.