

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES POLICY

Name of Policy:	Student Support Services Policy (incorporating Student Counseling Support and Welfare Policy)
Applicability:	All Staff and Students
Contact Person:	Student Support Officer
Original Issue date:	11 November 2012
Current Version approval:	Jan 2020
Next review:	Jan 2021
Related policies and documents:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance policy • Academic (monitoring course) Progress policy • Critical Incident policy • Completion within the expected duration of study policy • Student Discipline and Misconduct policy • Transfer Between Registered Providers policy • NORTHWEST Brochure • Student Handbook • Student Code of Conduct • Orientation Guide
RTO:	91781
CRICOS Provider Number:	03256G

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1** NORTHWEST aims to provide a personalised, innovative teaching and supportive learning environment in which students receive valuable educational experience. NORTHWEST seeks to support each student to achieve their potential through early identification of, and response to, personal and academic issues which have the potential to adversely affect their educational achievement.
- 1.2** The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students are provided with access to services that assist them in meeting course requirements and maintaining attendance.
- 1.3** Overseas students are provided with further support to adjust to study and life in Australia to satisfactorily achieve the outcomes of their course under their student visa conditions.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1** The CEO or nominated officer is responsible for the implementation and review of this policy; and to ensure that NORTHWEST abides by, and meets, the requirements of Standard 6 of The National Code 2007 for supporting overseas students.
- 2.2** NORTHWEST has a designated member of staff who is responsible for NORTHWEST Support Services for students.
- 2.3** Administration Officers are responsible for the ongoing administration of this policy in relation to analysing the attendance in the student administration system and the subsequent notifications to students.
- 2.4** NORTHWEST has sufficient support staff to support the needs of the students enrolled at the college.

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3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 Course progress: the measure of advancement within a course towards the completion of that course.

3.2 Satisfactory attendance: Attendance at a minimum of 80% of scheduled course contact hours with a study period.

3.3 Student support services: Services, which address the physical, mental, social and spiritual well being of overseas students. The Student support services may include a direct provision or referral, information or advice.

3.4 Critical Incident: A traumatic event, or threat, which is likely to cause physical and / or emotional distress involving NORTWEST, its students and staff.

3.5 Meeting satisfactory Course Progress – NORTWEST expects all students to meet their study and learning commitments including taking responsibility for their own academic progress. Students are deemed to have made satisfactory progress when they are Competent in 50% or more units of competency in any study period (one Term).

3.6 Completion within the expected duration of course - Amount of time (weeks, months or years) provided for the course to be successfully completed. The RTO must not extend the duration without good reason and evidence. The RTO may extend the duration where the student will not be able to complete the course because of:

- Compassionate and compelling circumstances
- Provision of an intervention strategy
- An approved deferment or suspension has been granted

3.7 Transfer between registered providers – NORTWEST cannot enrol a transferring student in the first six months of their principal course of study except in accordance with the requirements of The National Code. Students in their first six months of their principal course of study must apply for a letter of release from NORTWEST if requesting a transfer to another provider.

4. POLICY PRINCIPLES

4.1 NORTWEST is committed to providing students with appropriate academic and welfare support services, information, advice and assistance to help them attain academic success and improve their personal well-being whilst undertaking a course at NORTWEST. Support services at NORTWEST are not limited to academic issues.

4.2 NORTWEST recognises its duty of care to students. The health, wellbeing and safety of students are important to us and NORTWEST aims to provide support and referral to numerous services. Some support areas include but are not limited to accommodation, health providers, lifestyle referrals and accommodation and family issues.

4.3 Academic and welfare support services are also aimed at assisting students to make the transition to living and studying away from home and in a tertiary education environment.

4.4 NORTWEST recognises the diversity of student learning needs and is committed to the welfare of all students. NORTWEST is a culturally sensitive environment. NORTWEST encourages staff and students to be professional and courteous to all and respect cultural difference. At the same time we aim to share an Australian cultural experience with all. Our services are available to all without discrimination, and the NORTWEST environment aims to respect differences while providing equity in service.

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5. SUPPORT SERVICES PROCESSES

NORTWEST staff are not trained medical or legal practitioners. In supporting students, NORTWEST staff can support students and provide referrals, which may include:

5.1 Welfare (Physical, Mental and Emotional)

The Student Support Officer or delegate will be available to discuss physical, mental, or emotional issues that may arise for students during their course of studies and refer students to professional counselling, medical or community services as appropriate.

5.2 Financial

Students who have financial issues during the course of their studies can discuss concerns with a Student Support Officer and Finance Officer.

5.3 Legal Advice

Students needing legal advice can contact a Student Support Officer for a referral to legal aid if required. Links to various legal information services can be found on the NORTWEST's website at www.nortwest.edu.au

6. ORIENTATION PROGRAM

6.1 On arrival at NORTWEST, all students are provided with an orientation information session. At the session, a student is advised and expected to be aware of, but not limited, to the NORTWEST orientation guide, brochure, handbook and policies.

6.2 The NORTWEST orientation program covers numerous areas of information including support services available to assist in the transition into life and study in Australia; access to external services such as legal, emergency and health services; facilities and resources; complaints and appeals processes; information on visa conditions relating to course progress and attendance.

7. COURSE PROGRESS AND ATTENDANCE

7.1 The Student Support Officer or delegate is available to assist students with information and advice in regard to course enrolment issues, maintaining satisfactory attendance, academic progress, or educational outcomes or pathways. Students at risk of unsatisfactory attendance and / or academic course progress are identified through tracking reports generated regularly throughout the study period, and monitored by Administration and Student Support Services. Refer to the NORTWEST's Academic (Monitoring Course) Progress and Attendance policies. Course progress and maintaining attendance are student visa requirements and the policies support these requirements for overseas students.

7.2 NORTWEST academic staff members are also available to assist students. Student may be referred to a relevant person or support service outside NORTWEST.

8. OVERSEAS STUDENT TRANSFER BETWEEN PROVIDERS

8.1 NORTWEST cannot enrol an overseas student in the first six months of their principal course of study with another registered provider except in accordance with the requirements of The National Code.

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8.2 Students wishing to transfer to another registered provider must apply for a letter of release from NORTWEST if requesting a transfer. NORTWEST may not grant or issue a letter of release if a student has not completed the first six months of their principal course of study. The student will be notified of the reasons for refusal. Refer to the Transfer between registered providers policy.

9. TRANSITION TO STUDY AND LIFE IN AUSTRALIA

The NORTWEST Brochure, Student Services Guide and the website have useful information on the transition into life and study in Australia. The Student Support Officer or delegate is also available for students to discuss issues.

10. EMERGENCIES AND HEALTH SERVICES

The Student Handbook and Student Services Guide along with information on the NORTWEST website include key emergency and health services contacts and information. For emergencies, NORTWEST also has a 24 hour emergency telephone contact number to assist students with emergency student issues.

11. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

The Student Brochure and NORTWEST website provide information on facilities and resources at NORTWEST.

12. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

The NORTWEST Brochure and the website provides a link to the ESOS (Education Services for Overseas Students) framework and outlines the protection of rights of overseas students and their responsibilities. NORTWEST has a Complaints and Appeals Policy to facilitate the resolution of complaints and appeal issues. NORTWEST staff is available to support students with these processes. Students are encouraged to resolve issues informally in the first instance.

13. LEARNING, LITERACY AND NUMERACY SKILLS SUPPORT SERVICES

Current students of NORTWEST have access to academic support services and NORTWEST will assist students to meet the learning requirements of their chosen course.

14. SUPPORT FOR A STUDENT WITH DISABILITY

A student should advise NORTWEST on application of any disability and provide documentation that may affect the student's progress, prior to commencement of the course.

Where staff are aware of a disability affecting a student, reasonable adjustments can be made to teaching arrangements/materials to assist students with their learning.

15. IT SUPPORT

Students have access to the college facilitates, technology and IT support during office hours, which can be arranged through reception, if needed. Students are provided with access to e-

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learning sites and other services including student email and portal. Trainer /Assessors also assist with access and use of the e- learning system.

16. KEY STAFF HOURS OF AVAILABILITY

Key personnel involved in student support services are:

- Student support staff are available by appointment and booking can be made through reception, and could include anyone involved in personal, academic, legal, financial, marketing or visa issues with students. Should a student request a meeting within core office times, staff will make all effort to be available within reasonable timeframes.
- Should a staff member need to see a student, the appointment should ideally be scheduled during core office hours where possible to minimise disruption to the student's schedules. The only exceptions to this will be trainer/ assessors who are unavailable during training sessions.
- Reception and administration staff are available during college business hours.
- Sessional staff are also expected to be available for individual student consultation (on campus) upon appointment.

17. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Students will be provided with up-to -date information on the welfare and support services offered by NORTWEST via the following mechanisms:

- The NORTWEST Brochure provides a summary of support services provided by the college. This brochure can be accessed via the NORTWEST website www.northwest.edu.au
- The NORTWEST Student Handbook and Orientation Guide are available electronically via the NORTWEST's website www.northwest.edu.au or from Reception. These documents contain information including:
 - Academic calendar information
 - Policies for overseas and domestic student (e.g. Attendance, Course Progress)
 - Procedures related to studying at the college (eg. enrolling in courses and units, paying fees and Overseas Student Health Cover)
 - Learning support information – English, discipline, specific and general academic skills support available at NORTWEST
 - Personal support – advice to help new students adapt, information relating to welfare, safety, language and cultural issues that may be relevant to students from a non-English speaking background, specific support services. These materials are always available to students online at the NORTWEST website.

18. CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

NORTWEST has a comprehensive Critical Incident Policy to be enacted for any incident, which has the potential to, or actually does, impinge upon the well-being of NORTWEST students, staff or the NORTWEST. The Critical Incident Policy includes procedures that cover the actions to be taken in the event of a critical incident, follow up, recording of the incident and action

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taken. The critical incident policy also includes critical numbers for police and important emergency services.

A critical incident includes but is not limited to: a missing student; severe verbal or psychological aggression; death, serious injury or threat of these; natural disaster; issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, and drug or alcohol abuse. Non-life threatening incidents can also qualify as critical incidents. When recording information and dealing with situations NORTWEST will always ensure that we comply with information privacy principles and where possible will not release personal information.

Relevant NORTWEST staff is provided with information in relation to this policy to ensure that they are alert and responsive to incidents, which affect our students. For full details refer to the Critical Incident Policy via the NORTWEST website www.nortwest.edu.au

19. STUDENT SAFETY

- NORTWEST provides information to raise student awareness to personal safety risks and issues and what to do in the event of a personal crisis. This information will also convey the types of behaviours which are considered unacceptable in Australia (eg, harassment, discrimination, bullying, violence etc), and what to do if they experience such events. Information to students will also include safe travel tips.
- NORTWEST has a Workplace Health and Safety Policy which requires NORTWEST to monitor and address any reported hazards in the workplace.

20. STUDENT MISCONDUCT

- A student suspected of academic or general misconduct will be dealt with according to the Student Discipline and Misconduct Policy.
- Students will be made aware of consequences of misconduct during the Orientation sessions and by referral to the relevant policy.
- Formal intervention strategies may be required in cases where students are not meeting their academic, attendance or behavioural requirements.
- For full details refer to the NORTWEST website www.nortwest.edu.au

21. CULTURAL AWARENESS

All staff members and contractors are required to respect cultural differences. NORTWEST aims to build sensitivity for issues relating to a multi-cultural environment. Overseas students will also receive some information to help assist them to deal with the cultural challenges and potential differences associated with living and studying in Australia. For full details refer to the Student Orientation Guide located on the NORTWEST website www.nortwest.edu.au

22. HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

NORTWEST has in place policies to support the prevention of harassment, bullying and discrimination affecting the campus. The Anti-discrimination, Code of Conduct and related policies are available online via the NORTWEST website.

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23. RECORDS AND INFORMATION

All documentation will be kept in the student record both in the main student file and electronically.

24. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Forms and Record Keeping:

Title	Document Location	Responsible Officer	Minimum Retention Period
Student Monitoring Agreement and Plan - Intervention Form – student contact record	1. Student's File 2. Student Administration Systems	Student Support Officer	2 years after last entry

25. REFERENCES

- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000
- The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
- Standard 6 of The National Code.

26. IMPLEMENTATION

The Student Support Services Policy and Procedure will be implemented throughout NORTHWEST via:

1. An announcement notice emailed to all students and staff
2. Inclusion on the NORTHWEST website – Downloads
3. From reception

27. REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Date	Description of modifications
1	April 2010	Original
2.1	March 2012	Revised and information update
3	July 2012	Additional information and clarification
4	August 2014	Revised and information update
4.1	October 2014	V14.1 Revised wording
5	August 2015	Review
6	Jan 2016	Review, minor changes
7	March 2017	Update company name, logo and footer
8	Aug 2018	Review and reference to National Code 2018
9	Jan 2020	Annual review