

## CHS Student Welfare and Safety Policy & Procedure

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## 1. Purpose

This purpose of this policy is to outline the range of welfare and support services that CHS provides and how students can access these services.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to the staff and students. The policy includes the provision of counselling, advice and support regarding safety and student welfare.

## 3. Definitions

Term	Definition
<i>Appeal</i>	An application to reconsider a decision made by the College.
<i>Exclusion</i>	Permanent cancellation of a student's enrolment in their course and the termination of their rights and privileges as a student of CHS, including their right to re-apply for admission.
<i>Grievance</i>	A complaint or concern raised against some aspect of the College including, but not limited to, actions, processes or facilities which are considered unfair, disadvantageous, wrong or inadequate.
<i>Overseas student</i>	An overseas student who is studying in Australia on a student visa.
<i>Bullying</i>	Bullying occurs where an individual or group of individuals repeatedly behave unreasonably towards a person or group of persons (in this instance, a student or group of students), and that behaviour creates a risk to health and safety.
<i>Complaint</i>	An expression of dissatisfaction made in relation to an action, decision or omission within the responsibility and control of the College, a College staff member or a student, where a response or resolution process is expected wherever possible.
<i>Unsatisfactory Academic Progress</i>	Refers to the academic status of a student who is identified as making unsatisfactory course progress as defined in the CHS Course Progress Policy.

## 4. Regulatory Context

Section 2.3 of the HESF addresses Wellbeing and Safety. The subsections 2.3.1 to 2.3.5 describe more specifically the HESF requirements. Some of these regulatory requirements are met by CHS through different policies as noted in the following table. *TEQSA Guidance Note: Wellbeing & Safety (8 January 2018)* also refers to student welfare and safety requirements. The CHS Student Welfare and Safety Policy provides both the 'overarching framework of guiding policies and effective processes for these functions' and evidence of

'sufficient corporate commitment to promoting wellbeing and safety with enough resources to support these activities' (page 2).

#### CHS Policies, Plan and Information Resources for Student Well-being and Safety

2.3	Wellbeing and Safety	CHS Policies and Resources
2.3.1	All students are advised of the actions they can take, the staff they may contact and the support services that are accessible if their personal circumstances are having an adverse effect on their education.	CHS Student Welfare and Safety Policy CHS Student Admin & Support Plan CHS Orientation Pack CHS Student Engagement & Retention Policy CHS Course Progress Policy CHS Student Fees Policy
2.3.2	Timely, accurate advice on access to personal support services is available, including for access to emergency services, health services, counselling, legal advice, advocacy, and accommodation and welfare services.	CHS Student Admin & Support Plan CHS Website – Student Welfare & Support Info CHS Orientation Pack CHS Student Engagement & Retention Policy CHS Critical Incident Policy
2.3.3	The nature and extent of support services that are available for students are informed by the needs of student cohorts, including mental health, disability and wellbeing needs.	CHS Website – Student Welfare & Support Info CHS Orientation Pack CHS Student Engagement & Retention Policy CHS Course Progress Policy
2.3.4	A safe environment is promoted and fostered, including by advising students and staff on actions they can take to enhance safety and security on campus and online.	CHS Website – Student Welfare & Support Info CHS Orientation Pack CHS Student Engagement & Retention Policy Display Student Notices in each Campus Group Messages on Personal Safety and Risks
2.3.5	There is a critical-incident policy together with readily accessible procedures that cover the immediate actions to be taken in the event of a critical incident and any follow up required.	CHS Critical Incident Policy CHS Student Welfare and Safety Policy CHS Website – Student Welfare & Support Info CHS Orientation Pack

## 5. Policy Statements

CHS recognises and values student diversity and understands that student cohorts have different needs. CHS is committed to providing appropriate welfare and safety support services to complement its academic support services and to encourage students to achieve their educational goals. CHS understands the importance of timely support, particularly assisting new students to make the transition to living and studying away from home and in a new educational environment.

In addition to the Student Services Team resident in each campus, a Student Welfare and Support Officer at each campus in the role is the first point of contact for all students on all aspects of welfare and safety.

## 6. Student Administration and Support Plan

CHS has developed a Student Administration and Support Plan that demonstrates in detail the provisions that the College has planned to put in place to fulfil its obligations to students under Section 2.3 of the HESF2015 as well as the National Code2018. The table of contents demonstrates the scope covered in our plan, viz.

- Goals for Student Administration and Support Services
- Projected Enrolments - 2020
- Governance and Management Responsibilities
- Policies and Constraints
- Student Administrative & Services Staff
- Processes & Procedures
- Initial Advice and Orientation
- Academic Consultation and Support
- On-going Support of International Students
- Student Engagement and Welfare
- Physical & Electronic Resources
- CHS Microsoft SharePoint
- Student Management System
- Financial Management System
- Action HRM
- Campuses (lay-out, equipment and amenities)
- Student Administration & Support Outcomes
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Schedule of Activities

As noted the College takes student administration and support services very seriously and has put in place a concrete plan with defined governance and responsibility allocation, a suite of policies and sufficient resources that progressively increase with the rise in the projected enrolments as well as systems and tools (Student Administration Portal, Student Management System and Learning Management System) to provide optimum support to all students. The College is able to tap the considerable expertise and experience as well as resources that are provided by the ECA for support of international students.

## **7. Information Dissemination**

The College informs all students at the time of orientation of the range of welfare and support services available at CHS, including access to the student services team and the welfare officer at each campus. Such information is also included in the orientation pack which is distributed to all new and current students. Those who cannot attend the orientation day will receive the orientation pack via email. The orientation pack shall include information on the following:

- Social media policy and risks
- Accommodation support
- Local amenities and services
- Grievances
- Emergency procedures
- Banking and financial transactions
- Health and well being
- Personal safety and security
- Casual employment
- Student associations
- Professional and voluntary organisations.

Student Services team shall be the initial point of contact for all course related issues, such as timetables, College email account, payment of tuition fees, student and library card, photocopying and student amenities. The College shall use the inbuilt communication App of the Student Management System (MeshEd) to inform students of important new information related to students' welfare and safety when appropriate.

In addition, the College website shall publish the key information on safety and welfare issues, provide simple links for students to access both internal and external services, and inform students of potential risks.

## **8. Academic Support**

CHS provides a range of English classes and workshops to all students free of charge through ELSIS. The classes are for academic studies and for professional development, such as resume writing. The academic staff of the College shall encourage overseas students to take advantage of the English classes. In the case of students identified to be at risk attending a certain number of such classes will often form part of their study plan and evidence of completion is normally required. The College is particularly focused on the newly enrolled students who need additional academic mentoring and support to transition to their studies at CHS (see ***CHS Student Engagement and Retention Policy***).

All students have access to the Academic Support Team in each campus to seek specific academic assistance with their studies. Students may also discuss their academic concerns directly with their unit convenor for additional academic support. Students can also raise their specific support requirements with the relevant Director of Study or Dean. See also ***CHS Student Grievance and Appeals Policy***.

In addition to the provision of free English classes, the College provides free academic workshops and individualised tuition sessions to students to support them in their learning endeavour. A list of academic skills workshops is provided to all students at the time of orientation and also published on the College premises and on its websites.

## **9. Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct**

The College has zero tolerance for any form of plagiarism and academic misconduct, particularly incidents of contract cheating. The College shall enforce the terms contained in the CHS Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures to discourage any form of plagiarism. Students and staff suspecting any act of cheating or academic misconduct are required to report the same to the College as outlined in CHS Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures.

## **10. Welfare/Personal Support**

The first point of contact is the campus-based Student Welfare and Support Officer who can discuss a range of physical, mental or emotional or legal issues with students. The Welfare Officer may refer a student to professional counselling or medical or other support services if he/she is of the opinion that such support is essential. The College provides free and confidential counselling services at each campus, and students can make an appointment to see the Counsellors via the Welfare Officer.

## **11. Emergency and Crisis Support**

The College has in place procedures for emergency and crisis situations that impact on a student's welfare and well-being. Students may experience personal crisis or be involved in emergency situations or be impacted by their close family and or friends experiencing emergency situations or be aggrieved due to the loss of a close family member or friend. Also in some cases overseas students may be affected by the political upheavals or natural disasters in their own home country which may impact their ability to progress in an

orderly manner and thus may need support. CHS provides access to professional counselling free of charge to all students.

In cases of emergencies or personal crisis follow the steps outlined below:

Step 1: Speak to the Student Welfare Officer either in person (for campus-based students) or via phone for all other students. It is important that students impacted by personal or close family crisis or are in need of emergency assistance to contact the College's Welfare Officer or Student Services or by phone as soon as possible so that the College can assess practical measures it can take to support student.

Step 2: Seek advice from the CHS Counsellor. The Welfare Officer shall organise for student to meet the Counsellor in the campus or via the phone, as soon as possible. In urgent cases involving immediate risk to physical or mental state of student, the Welfare Officer shall organise for transfer of student to a clinic or a hospital as deemed appropriate.

Step 3: In cases of acute depression the Welfare Officer may intervene to refer student to qualified professional but also encourage student to contact [Lifeline Australia](#) or [Beyond Blue](#) or similar services where they can confidentially talk to a qualified person. Students who are feeling depressed persistently should be referred to the Counsellor, or if the conditions are acute the student may need referral to mental health care professionals or a mental hospital.

Step 4: Student suffers a critical incident on campus. In such a situation the Welfare and Safety Officer must follow the College's **Critical Incident Policy** which specifies a process to handle such cases.

Step 5: Inform the Director of Study/Dean so that the College can apply the provisions of Special Consideration to student and provide additional academic support where appropriate and possible. While the **CHS Course Progress Policy** covers academic progression issues and provision of additional academic support, there is also a need for emotional support and empathy as well as counselling to enable student to cope with such circumstances.

Lifeline (24 hours)  
Telephone: 13 11 14  
Website: [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

Beyondblue  
Infoline: 1300 22 4636  
Website: [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

The College shall train the academic staff members to be alert to students who have experienced emergency situations or are affected by exceptional circumstances. Refer to the CHS Critical Incident Policy in terms of handling a critical incident.

## 12. Financial Hardship

The Student Services Team can provide a range of advice on payment of tuition fees. If the student is experiencing financial hardship that is causing undue stress or anxiety, the student should contact the campus-based Student Welfare Officer who will consider the case and advise the student accordingly. The

Student Welfare Officer may arrange for deferment of instalment payment of tuition fees or may decide to escalate the case to the Registrar or the Director of Administration and Student Services if appropriate.

### **13. Accommodation Support Services**

*2Stay Accommodation* is a service for CHS students. It provides well-appointed student accommodation units with internet and other essential services to the new arrivals to enable them to settle down in Australia and gain enough local knowledge to make a decision on where they wish to live. *2Stay* will also arrange airport pick up and drop off services for students who apply for the same at the time of filling in their application form. These services incur fees that students will need to bear directly. Overseas students can opt to benefit from any of these services at the time of applying for admission to a course at CHS.

### **14. IT and Technical Support**

Each campus has a resident IT Support Officer who is trained to support all students and staff on issues related to accessing the wireless internet or logging onto the College computers or similar technical or network-related issues. In addition, students have access to the IT Systems Manager in relation to web-based services, such as accessing the online administrative forms or the online learning resources. As stated in the IT Systems and Services Plan, the College provides a dedicated email account to each student as well as the license to download the MS Office Suite of software for their educational use. For more information on technical support refer to ***CHS IT Systems and Services Plan***.

### **15. Discrimination and Harassment**

The College is committed to providing a safe and stimulating environment for students and staff to engage in scholarly and enriching activities free from all threats and or discrimination. The College has a policy against any form of discrimination and or harassment which shall be enforced fully (see ***CHS Anti-discrimination and Harassment Policy***). Note that the College has in place a Student Code of Conduct that is binding on all students. All incidents of misconduct shall be identified and dealt with firmly.

### **16. Student Safety and Security**

The College publishes information on its website concerning the safety and security of students and staff on or off campus and alerts students to personal safety risks and or traps to becoming a victim of financial fraud or being exposed to gambling or illicit drugs. As part of the orientation the College informs students of the risks to their personal safety and security (see ***Student Orientation Pack***), paying particular attention to the security and safety of overseas students who may not be familiar with the local conditions.

### **17. Administrative Support**

Student Services staff in all campuses have been trained to provide support services to students on a range of student administrative areas, including advice on enrolment, RPL application, regulatory requirements, social events and functions (whether organised by the College or others), access to the medical centres, local travel, local amenities and use of College facilities. In addition, students may use the ***online forms*** to submit a request in any of the areas of concern including submitting a complaint. As soon as a student submits a

request online, the relevant workflow will be triggered and the staff member in charge alerted. This expedites the processing of the request.

## **18.Responsibilities**

Responsibility for the full implementation of Student Welfare and Safety Policy rests with the Director of Administration and Student Services who shall be assisted by the Student Welfare and Support Officer and the Student Services Team in each campus. In terms of access to the academic support services, the Director and or the Student Services shall coordinate appointments with academics or otherwise facilitate access to the academic staff, relevant Director of Studies or the Dean.

## **19.Records**

Records associated with this policy will be maintained according to the Records Management Policy and Record Retention and Disposal Schedule.

## **20.Related Documents**

- CHS Student Engagement and Retention Policy
- CHS Course Progress Policy
- CHS Privacy Policy
- CHS Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures
- CHS Student Grievance and Appeals Policy
- CHS Student Non-Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures
- CHS Student Code of Conduct
- CHS Critical Incident Policy
- CHS Equity and Diversity Policy

## **21.Related legislation**

- Higher Education Support Act 2003
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2011
- TEQSA Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015
- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 and National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code 2018)