



# **Student Handbook for VET Students**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Pledge**

We enrich the lives of people. We provide learning in a fun, caring and responsive environment. This opens a world of opportunity for our students.

### **Promise**

We are responsive, and we care.

### **Core Values**

Empathy, Commitment, Integrity, Fun & Teamwork.

# INTRODUCTION

## WELCOME

Welcome to Mercury Colleges. This handbook provides you with everything you need to know about studying with us in Australia. By choosing us as your education provider, you are choosing a high-quality and industry relevant course and education provider to ensure you are set up for the future. The Mercury Colleges Student Handbook is for students who enrol in an English language course registered on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) at [www.cricos.education.gov.au](http://www.cricos.education.gov.au). It contains important information to provide student support from commencement to completion.

## ABOUT US

Located in Sydney CBD, Mercury Colleges provides courses in the areas of leadership and management, marketing and communication, business, individual support, ageing support, project management and ELICOS courses. With well-located and comfortable facilities for students, industry current trainers and assessors along with modern equipment and resources, Mercury Colleges is a wise choice for your learning and future.

Mercury Colleges is a provider of vocational education and training (or VET as it is commonly known). The VET sector in Australia is based on a partnership between governments and industry. VET qualifications are provided by government institutions, called Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutions, as well as private institutions.

We are a private institution. VET courses broaden your skills in specialised areas and are competency based. This means that you are either Competent, or Not Competent, and if you achieve competence for all your units that make up a qualification then you can be awarded with your qualification certificate. To read further about vocational education and to see the various certificate levels which make up the framework, follow the link: <https://www.studyaustralia.gov.au/en/plan-your-studies/vocational-education-and-training>

As well as offering VET courses, we also offer English language courses (also known as ELICOS courses) which help you to develop your English language skills for everyday life, including work and study. To read more about English courses and the types of English language courses, follow the link: <https://www.studyaustralia.gov.au/en/plan-your-studies/english-courses>

Mercury Colleges Details	
<b>Company Name:</b>	Mercury Colleges Pty Ltd
<b>RTO Name:</b>	Mercury Colleges
<b>Address:</b>	Level 1,2,5 &7, 245 Castlereagh St. NSW 2000
<b>RTO ID:</b>	0872
<b>CRICOS Provider Code:</b>	00172B
<b>ABN:</b>	55 001 799 891
<b>Telephone:</b>	(02) 8211 1128
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@mercurycolleges.edu.au">info@mercurycolleges.edu.au</a>

## MERCURY COLLEGES STAFF

The following chart provides details of important staff that will provide support and assistance during your study at Mercury Colleges:

Department	Position	Name
<b>Management</b>	Chief Executive Officer	Dr Jacob Semhat
	CFO	Alan Qin
	ELICOS Academic Manager	Kellie Marzol
	VET Academic Manager	Sam Hillani
	Operations Manager	Adam Ibrahim
	Compliance Manager/EA	Daria Poerschke
<b>Marketing and Sales</b>	Group Marketing Manager	Niphaphon Chitchom
	Marketing Support	Saowanee Rongwittayakorn
	Marketing Manager	Viviana Penida Camila Cavalcante
<b>Student Services Head Office</b>	Student Services Manager	Zainab Mohsen
	Student Services Officer	Jillyan Padilla Prakai Prajit Rafael Petti
<b>Welfare and Support</b>	Student Welfare Counsellor	Zainab Mohsen
	VET Support Officer	Mike Ibrahim
	Clinical Facilitator /Registered Nurse	Wei Xue Samiksha Thapaliya
<b>Finance</b>	Accounts	Grace Hu
<b>IT</b>	IT Support	Reach out to IT Help Desk

## OUR OBLIGATION TO YOU

As a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and CRICOS Education Provider registered with Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), we have an obligation to ensure the quality of the nationally recognised training and assessment we deliver. We must comply at all times with the Outcome Standards for RTOs, which are part of the VET Quality Framework, as well as the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code) and the ELICOS Standards 2018.

We take this seriously, so we have developed policies and procedures along with systems within our business to make sure we comply with the standards and legislation. As we are responsible, this means that we take responsibility for any third parties we may work with – this includes training partners, education agents and sales/marketing providers. We participate in audits with the regulator (ASQA) and must provide them with information when they request it.

We are also required to issue you with your Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) certification documents (VET courses only) once you have been found competent and with certification for ELICOS courses too. If you feel in any way that we are not living up to our obligations, you have the right to make a complaint. Please see the 'Complaints and Appeals' section of this handbook for information on how to do so.

## OUR CONTACT DETAILS

Main telephone number: (02) 8211 1128

Email: [info@mercurycolleges.edu.au](mailto:info@mercurycolleges.edu.au)

Website: [www.mercurycolleges.edu.au](http://www.mercurycolleges.edu.au)

## STUDENT SUPPORT CONTACT DETAILS

CEO: Jacob Semhat

Available 24/7 for emergency situations.

RTO Manager: Jacob Semhat

Administration: Alessandra Brambilla (02) 8211 1118

Student Services Office: Zainab Mohsen (02) 8211 1128

*Available via the main contact telephone number.*

## OUR LOCATION

We are located at:

Sydney CBD Campus: Level 1,2,5 &7, 245 Castlereagh St. NSW 2000

Google Maps link:

<https://g.co/kgs/khggqmr>



## COLLEGE FACILITIES

To ensure students have good study experience, our campus provides:

- Spacious, well-lit classrooms
- Computers and Internet access including Wi-fi on all floors
- Welfare counselling
- Monthly social activities and excursions
- Accommodation options
- Lunch areas with seating, sinks, microwaves, and fridges
- Language assistance

## ABOUT OUR AREA

Sydney is located in the vibrant state of New South Wales and is Australia's largest and most internationally recognised city. Known for its iconic landmarks like the Sydney Opera House and Harbour Bridge, Sydney offers a stunning harbour, world-renowned beaches such as Bondi and Manly, and a rich mix of cultural, dining, and entertainment experiences.

The city is well-connected with a world-class international airport, an extensive road and rail network, and a fully integrated public transport system. We recommend you purchase an **Opal Card** for convenient travel across trains, buses, ferries, and light rail services. Visit <https://www.opal.com.au> for information on how to get, top up, and manage your Opal Card.

For more information about Sydney, visit the official tourism website: <https://www.sydney.com>

For more information about Sydney please visit the website this information has been sourced from:

- Discover Sydney – <http://www.discoverysydney.com.au/>
- Australian Tourist Commission – [www.sydney.com.au](http://www.sydney.com.au)
- Official City of Sydney Site – [www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au)
- Lonely Planet – <https://www.lonelyplanet.com.au>
- Tourism New South Wales – <https://www.visitnsw.com/>
- Sydney Transport – <https://transportnsw.info/>
- Bureau of Meteorology – <http://www.bom.gov.au/>

## COURSES WE OFFER

Mercury Colleges offers a variety of courses to international students.

### Non-award English Courses:

- General English (CRICOS Course Code: 059870M) 4-72 weeks
- Pearson Test of English-Academic Preparation (CRICOS Course Code:15118H) 12 weeks
- IELTS Preparation (Intermediate) (CRICOS Course Code: 059871K) 12 weeks

### VET Courses:

- BSB30120 Certificate III in Business (CRICOS Course Code: 106721H) 78 weeks
- BSB40120 Certificate IV in Business (CRICOS Course Code: 106722G) 52 weeks
- BSB50420 Diploma of Leadership and Management (CRICOS Course Code: 106713H) 78 weeks
- BSB60420 Advanced Diploma of Leadership and Management (CRICOS Course Code: 106723F) 104 weeks
- BSB40820 Certificate IV in Marketing and Communication (CRICOS Course Code: 106724E) 52 weeks
- BSB5060 Diploma of Marketing and Communication (CRICOS Course Code: 106725D) 78 weeks
- BSB60520 Advanced Diploma of Marketing and Communication (CRICOS Course Code: 106726C) 104 weeks
- BSB40920 Certificate IV in Project Management Practice (CRICOS Course Code: 106712J) 52 weeks



- BSB50820 Diploma of Project Management (CIRCOS Course Code: 106715F) 78 weeks
- CHC33021 Certificate III in Individual Support (CRICOS Course Code:115219C) 52 weeks
- CHC43015 Certificate IV in Ageing Support (CRICOS Course Code: 097496B) 52 weeks
- CHC52021 Diploma of Community Services (CRICOS Course Code:115220K) 104 weeks

For detailed information about the admissions process, including course entry requirements and unit outlines, please visit our website at [www.mercurycolleges.edu.au](http://www.mercurycolleges.edu.au) or contact our admissions team at [admin@mercurycolleges.edu.au](mailto:admin@mercurycolleges.edu.au).

## VISAS AND CONDITIONS

After you have successfully completed the application and enrolment process, you will be issued with a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE). Once you have this, you can apply to the Department of Home Affairs for a student visa. You may choose to use a Registered Migration Agent or may choose to complete it yourself. More information about how to apply for a visa can be accessed here:

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-finder/study>



Once you have received your visa, you must abide by its conditions. If you don't, you can be sent home and won't be able to finish your course. Conditions include (but are not limited to):

- Satisfy attendance and/or course progress requirements and maintain a valid enrolment for your course.
- Only work if you have been given permission to do so as part of your visa grant (and not work more than the stipulated number of hours).
- Maintain approved Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) while in Australia.
- Notify us of your Australian address and any subsequent changes of address within 7 days.
- Complete the course within the duration specified in the CoE you received.
- Remain with the principal education provider for 6 months unless you are issued with a letter of release from the education provider to attend another institution.

## WHAT IS A USI AND WHY DO I NEED ONE?

USI is the acronym for Unique Student Identifier. It is a reference number that creates an online record of your training and qualifications attained in Australia. If you don't have a USI, then you can't be awarded your qualification or statement of attainment.

Under the Unique Student Identifiers Act 2014, all RTOs must ensure they have a valid USI for any student that enrolls in nationally recognised training from 2015. This means (unless you have an

exemption issued by the USI registrar) that as a student you must provide us with your USI. For information about USIs including how to create one visit <https://www.usi.gov.au/>.

- For information on exemptions visit: <https://www.usi.gov.au/exemptions>
- If you are having trouble creating a USI, we will assist you during the orientation session on the first day.
- Please note that if you are only studying an ELICOS course with us, you do not need a USI.

## EDUCATION AGENTS

Mercury Colleges uses education agents to assist us to recruit students. We have written agreements in place to ensure ethical practices as we hold our responsibility to our students, the sector and reputation of the VET industry in Australia very seriously. A list of approved education agents can be found on our website at [www.mercurycolleges.edu.au](http://www.mercurycolleges.edu.au)

## COURSE ORIENTATION

All students must attend a compulsory orientation program on their course commencement date for each course. Students must inform the college if they are not able to commence their course as soon as possible prior to their course commencement date. Under The Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act), if a student has not commenced studies or contacted the College by the scheduled commencement date, he/she will be reported to DHA via PRISMS within five (20) working days of the scheduled commencement date.

On the first day of your course, we will deliver an orientation session to you which includes an induction session. It's vital that you attend this as we will cover the following topics:

- Course information.
- English Placement Test and Course Entry interview
- Facilities and resources available at our campus.
- Emergency evacuation procedures.
- Your rights and responsibilities as a student including but not limited to Complaints and Appeals procedures
- Support services available.
- Legal, emergency and health services.
- Safety relevant to Australia and your environment.
- Critical incidents and critical incident reporting.
- Policies about course progress, attendance monitoring, deferral, suspension and cancellation, course transfer and our complaints and appeals process.
- Student visa conditions related to course progress and attendance.
- Information about work rights.
- Change of Study Plan or class
- Question and answer session.



## STUDENT ID CARDS

Students will be issued their student ID card within one week of course commencement, provided that a photograph was taken by the Student Services Officer on Orientation Day. The ID card serves as an official form of identification and must be carried at all times while on College premises for security purposes.

## WHAT CAN I EXPECT DURING TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT (VET STUDENTS)?

Vocational training and assessment is all about practical and competency-based learning and assessment that is relevant to industry and our modern world.

You will learn in the classroom and/or the practical work environment where the industry conditions are simulated to prepare you for your chosen field. You are required to undertake a range of assessment activities dependent on the course you are undertaking. Your assessment tasks will either be marked as Satisfactory or Not Satisfactory and achievement of a Satisfactory result for all assessment tasks within a unit of competency results in a mark of Competent for that unit. Once you have received a mark of Competent for all units that make up the qualification– you will be eligible to be awarded your qualification.

## MONITORING COURSE PROGRESS FOR STUDENTS ENROLLED IN VET “PACKAGED” COURSE

Overseas students can enrol in more than one (1) course that builds to the “principal” course in a “packaged” arrangement that is confirmed in the CoE. The highest level course is considered the principal course. The package defines the visa duration. Students enrolled in packaged courses who are at risk of failing units at any term and therefore not gaining a qualification in the package within the duration of the course as shown on the CoE will be reminded about the package course requirement as part of the academic intervention. Where a student does not achieve competency in one or more units at the end of the lower-level course in the package, then he/she has not maintained satisfactory course progress. It is expected that the student will complete the lower-level qualification to go on to the next course in their “package”. The study load and course duration may be affected and will be closely monitored.

## SUMMARY OF COURSE PROGRESS NOTIFICATIONS AND INTERVENTION FOR STUDENTS ENROLLED IN A COURSE AT MERCURY COLLEGES

Early intervention reminder SMS Course progress email notification At risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress	Students who have low attendance and NYC unit results may fall below the minimum progress set by the College in a block (5 weeks) are sent a notification by email warning of their

	attendance status and course progress for units in that block/term.
Unsatisfactory Course Progress warning letter #1 by email/ letter First warning - If they do not meet satisfactory course progress for the study period (1 term)	Students who have NYC units results for 50% of units in a term fall below the minimum progress set by the College are sent email/letter notification of their course progress in that term. Attendance is also reported to the student. The student is required to attend an intervention meeting. Students are on intervention from this point. Time is allowed for the internal appeals process (20 working days)
Intervention meeting and plan	The student is required to attend an intervention meeting by Week 2 of the following block. Students are on intervention and attendance and NYC results are monitored from this point. The intervention meeting is recorded. The intervention plan must be agreed by the student and the SSM. The plan must be signed and put into the records. At risk students are monitored every 5 weeks from this point onwards.
Intervention monitoring	Course progress and attendance is monitored in the following block of 5 weeks. The student is expected to have followed the plan and improved. Student support is provided as per the plan and the communication is recorded.
Unsatisfactory Course Progress warning letter #2 Unsatisfactory course progress at the end of 2nd consecutive study period – breaching visa conditions Where there are no compassionate grounds established, - College intends to report unsatisfactory course progress.	Despite intervention, possible no response to letters and no appeal process initiated by the student, means the College will escalate and send an urgent notification of unsatisfactory course progress. This occurs at the end of the 2nd consecutive study period.  Time allowed for the internal appeals process (20 working days)
Unsatisfactory Course Progress warning letter #2 Unsatisfactory course progress at the end of 2 <sup>nd</sup> consecutive study period – breaching visa conditions	Students fall below the 50% unit pass minimum set by the College at the end of the study period of 10 weeks are sent email /letter notification of their course progress in that term. The student is required to attend an intervention meeting at the College. This occurs at the end of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> consecutive study period.
Intervention meeting review	The student is required to attend an intervention meeting by Week 2 of the following term. The student has been monitored every 5 weeks on

	<p>the intervention plan but not improved sufficiently to meet satisfactory course progress criteria. A review of the student circumstances is discussed, and decisions are made. The intervention meeting is recorded.</p> <p>The intervention must be agreed by the student and the SSM. The review must be signed and put into the records.</p>
Intervention monitoring	<p>Course progress and attendance is monitored in the following block of 5 weeks. The student is expected to have followed the plan and decisions and improved.</p> <p>Student support is provided as per the plan</p> <p>Communication is recorded.</p> <p>Where there is no change, the College records the intervention has not been successful and moves to ITR</p>
Letter of Intention to Report (ITR) to DIHA for Unsatisfactory Course Progress	<p>Letter informs student of College's intention to report. States status of student's course progress then allows for appeals process. The student is allowed time for the internal (20 working days) and external appeals process (10 days).</p>

## COLLEGE ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The academic year of Mercury Colleges is 40 weeks divided into 4 terms of 10 weeks for every term. Students must study full time for a minimum 20 scheduled hours per week according to the timetable we supply. Students are only allowed to take breaks during the public holidays and nominated College holidays.

Term 1	Break	Term 2	Break	Term 3	Break	Term 4	Break
10 weeks	3 weeks	10 weeks	3 weeks	10 weeks	3 weeks	10 weeks	3 weeks

## COURSE TIMETABLE

Timetables and room allocations are set in advance but may change each term. You can check on your timetable in these ways:

- New students receive the timetable at orientation
- There is a calendar that is regularly updated in Moodle

## WORK PLACEMENTS (VET STUDENTS)

The CHC courses that we offer require you to complete a work placement. A work placement is structured workplace learning that is required as part of the course and prepares you for the workforce. The placement is designed to help you better understand what you have learned in classroom training and provides you with the opportunity to perform tasks relating to your course in an appropriate industry setting.

There are many benefits of participating in a work placement. You will have the opportunity to:

- apply the knowledge and skills learned during your course in a workplace setting
- gain skills that are recognised by industry
- get to know an employer.

Mercury Colleges will assist you to find a work placement, or you may find your own work placement. Further information will be provided at your orientation. However, it is important to understand that as a requirement of work placement you will be required to complete a National Police Certificate and some workplaces may require further checks such as working with children and disability worker checks. You will need to pay for these checks yourself and as a guide these checks would be around \$50 - \$80 each. Further details will be required at orientation.

It is also important to understand that certain workplaces have immunisation requirements. If you have any concerns about these requirements, please speak to us.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES WORKPLACE COORDINATORS

Mercury Colleges also employs qualified and experienced staff to plan and support work placement for our group of courses in aged care and community social work. The work placement arranged by Mercury Colleges is located within a 25km radius from the campus location or the student's residential address. If a student rejects the offered placement, a \$500 fee applies for the arrangement of a subsequent placement.

## SECURITY

Please do not leave your own possessions or college materials unattended. Carry your wallet with you always. The College shall not be liable for any loss, theft, or damage to personal property left unattended on campus premises, whether in classrooms, common areas, or elsewhere. Individuals are solely responsible for the security of their belongings at all times.

## RULES FOR COMPUTER LABS

Computers and software at the College are licensed and usage is restricted. The import or export of any software, images or information is forbidden unless at the direction of College staff.

- You may not use the computer room unless your teacher is present
- You are not permitted to download any files from the Internet unless they are related to your studies
- You must not adjust any of the computer default settings
- You must not play computer games on College IT equipment You must not bring any food or drink into the computer room You cannot share or rent your account and password

- Keep the room and equipment clean and tidy Be considerate to others
- Report all breakages/malfunctions/unauthorised use/tampering Do not try to fix any equipment – refer to college staff

## REASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS

### RE-ASSESSMENT (VET STUDENTS)

Arrangements for reassessment from the third attempt onwards will be arranged with you directly with our academic support staff if, and as, necessary. To pass each unit you must be deemed as satisfactory in all tasks. To gain your qualification, you must achieve a result of competent for each unit. Each unit will open twice per academic calendar for submission free of charge. Each unit will be open for submission twice as scheduled in the academic calendar. For the third attempt onwards, re-submission fees apply. Attempts one and two are counted based on the academic calendar, not your actual submission. This means if you fail to submit your assessment, it still counts as your first attempt. Bookings with our Academic Support team can be arranged via our Student Services Office or by using the booking link on our website here: <https://www.mercurycolleges.nsw.edu.au/go-online-2/>

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Large Language Models (LLMs) are increasingly being used in the workplace and educational facilities.

Mercury Colleges expects that all content generated in the course of undertaking studies with us will be your own original work.

Any use of AI will be for assistive purposes only, not to create substantive content for assessment.

Mercury Colleges has a plagiarism policy which sets out expectations regarding academic integrity and the methods we use to detect AI and LLMs in student assessments.

The plagiarism policy also covers our stance on cheating, collusion and other forms of plagiarism.

Usage of text directly from AI or LLMs is plagiarism and is treated as such.

Mercury Colleges provides students with further information about academic integrity during orientation and your trainer and assessor will also discuss this with you in class.

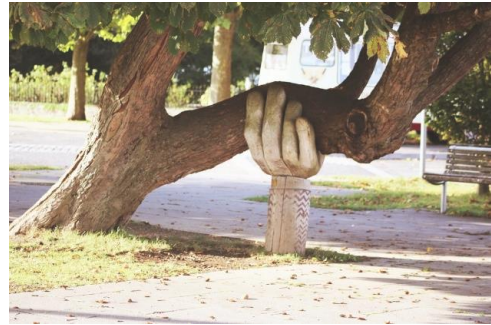
## SUPPORT AND WELFARE

We all need a little extra support sometimes and when you are living and studying overseas – you may need a little bit more than you normally would. We are here to help you – so don't ever be shy to let us know what you are going through and how we can help.



We offer the following in relation to support and welfare:

- One-to-one support from the trainer/assessor.
- Support with personal issues, including your overall wellbeing.
- Access to additional learning resources.
- Reasonable adjustment in assessment.
- Social events.
- Information about external sources of support.



You may not have studied for a while, may have English as a second language or need additional assistance. We will identify any additional support needs you may have at the time of application and enrolment and may prepare a Student Support Plan for you based on those needs.

We have a range of information we can provide you with on a variety of issues – this may be related to accommodation, legal or financial issues, cultural considerations, disability support, stress management – or maybe you are experiencing a bout of homesickness. If you are experiencing it – then we are concerned about it. Please communicate with us because we care. We don't charge for internal services, but you will be responsible for any external provider costs at the time you access the services. We can assist you to find local groups of like-minded people in the area, connect you with other students with similar interest groups or simply be a friendly listening ear when you need one.

Depending on your needs, we will provide you with a referral to the relevant local organisation and assist you to access services from them.

Some support services are listed in our 'Important information about Australia' section of this handbook – but it's best to come and speak to the Administration and Student Support Officer where you can have a confidential discussion and get the right type of service / support for your need or concern.

Free counselling is provided by our Welfare Counsellor is available to those studying at the College on matters ranging from private concerns to living issues.

Students can see the counsellor for a variety of reasons. Everyone finds themselves in difficult circumstances at some time in their lives. Sometimes students want to speak to someone who is professional, confidential, and separated from family and friends.

#### Why you may see the Counsellor

If you are having personal difficulties, or just want to talk about:

- A disability
- Relationships Family issues
- Ongoing problems with anxiety and stress
- low self-esteem
- If you need moral support in attempting something challenging

The College will provide access to welfare-related support services to assist students at no additional cost for the student, which includes counselling services. In some cases, the College counsellor may refer you to an external provider, which will be at no additional cost, however, the external provider



may have their own service fees, and students may have to pay this fee). Please contact the Student Services Office to learn more about Counselling Services that are offered and to make an appointment

## RPL AND CREDIT TRANSFER

**Credit transfer** is a formal recognition of previous studies and can help to reduce the duration of your course, as well as fees. You may apply for a credit transfer for a complete unit or modules within a unit. There is no charge to apply for a credit transfer but you need to let us know that you want to apply for this on your application for enrolment form in the relevant section. You will need to provide a certified copy of your certificate either issued by another education provider or an authenticated VET transcript issued by the USI Registrar.

**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** is a process where skills and knowledge that you have gained through work and life experience and other unrecognised training can be formally recognised. You need to let us know that you want to apply for RPL at the time of application by indicating this on the application for enrolment form in the relevant section. There is a charge for RPL and this can be viewed in the 'Fees and Refunds' section of this handbook. RPL can also reduce your course duration and fees.

We will inform you in writing of any reduced course duration and fees due to credit transfer and RPL and issue your CoE for the reduced duration of the course.

Please note that although we are required to offer you RPL, it would not be expected as an international student that you would pursue this opportunity as most likely you would not have relevant workplace experience and existing skills and knowledge.

## MAINTAINING YOUR STUDY LOAD

Mercury Colleges is required to monitor the enrolment load of students to ensure that at all times you are in a position to complete the course within the duration specified on your visa. There are limited circumstances in which students are permitted to receive an extension to the expected duration of study for the course.

### Approved Reduced Study Load

- We may permit a student to undertake a reduced study load over the academic year in the following limited circumstances;
- Student has been awarded exemptions (Credit) or RPL and there is no available course in that study period which will contribute to the program; or
- Student has not passed the required prerequisite courses to allow further enrolment; or
- Student has been approved for a reduced study load over the academic year as part of an intervention strategy for students who were at risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress; or
- Student has been granted an approved leave of absence under compassionate and compelling grounds.
- Students who are permitted to undertake a reduced study load will be provided with a revised study plan which must be followed for all future study periods.

## ISSUING CERTIFICATES (VET STUDENTS)

Once you have been found competent in all units you are enrolled in that make up your qualification and have paid all your relevant fees – we will issue you with your qualification and record of results within 30 days. If you withdraw, meaning that you only partially complete your course, then you will be issued with a Statement of Attainment (SoA) within 30 days of withdrawal for all the relevant units that you have completed as competent. We reserve the right to withhold the issuance of any certificates until all fees have been paid, except where we are not permitted to do so by law. We cannot issue your certificates if we do not have your USI on file, which is why we ensure upfront that you have created one and assist you to do so at the time of orientation if you have not created one prior to this. The qualifications are issued electronically and can be verified through the SMS by entering the credential number. Hard copies can be requested at an additional fee.

## REISSUING CERTIFICATION DOCUMENTS

We are required by law to keep records of your qualification and units achieved for at least thirty (30) years. If you lose your statements or qualification, we can re-issue these to you for an additional charge. Refer to our 'Fees and Refunds' section for more information.

## FEEDBACK

Your feedback is important to us! Like all businesses, we strive to improve and use feedback to make changes in line with continuous improvement. We want to make sure we are meeting the needs of current and future students so please let us know if something isn't right or you have a feedback suggestion by emailing or calling us.

You may also receive surveys from us from time to time. Please complete these and return as advised.



## IF YOUR DETAILS CHANGE...

From time to time your personal details may change. You might get a new mobile phone number, change your address or emergency contact details. It's actually a condition of your visa to notify us within 7 days if your address changes.

If you ever notice that something isn't right with some of your personal information or our records – please let us know so we can amend your records and correct it.

To notify us about your changed details, you can either attend our Student Services Office in person or email us from your registered student email account to [sso@mercurycolleges.edu.au](mailto:sso@mercurycolleges.edu.au)

## WHAT'S REQUIRED OF ME AS A STUDENT?

The next section of this handbook outlines important policies and processes that you need to know about as a student. It's expected that you have read through and are familiar with this information – keep this handbook handy for future reference so you can refer to it when needed.

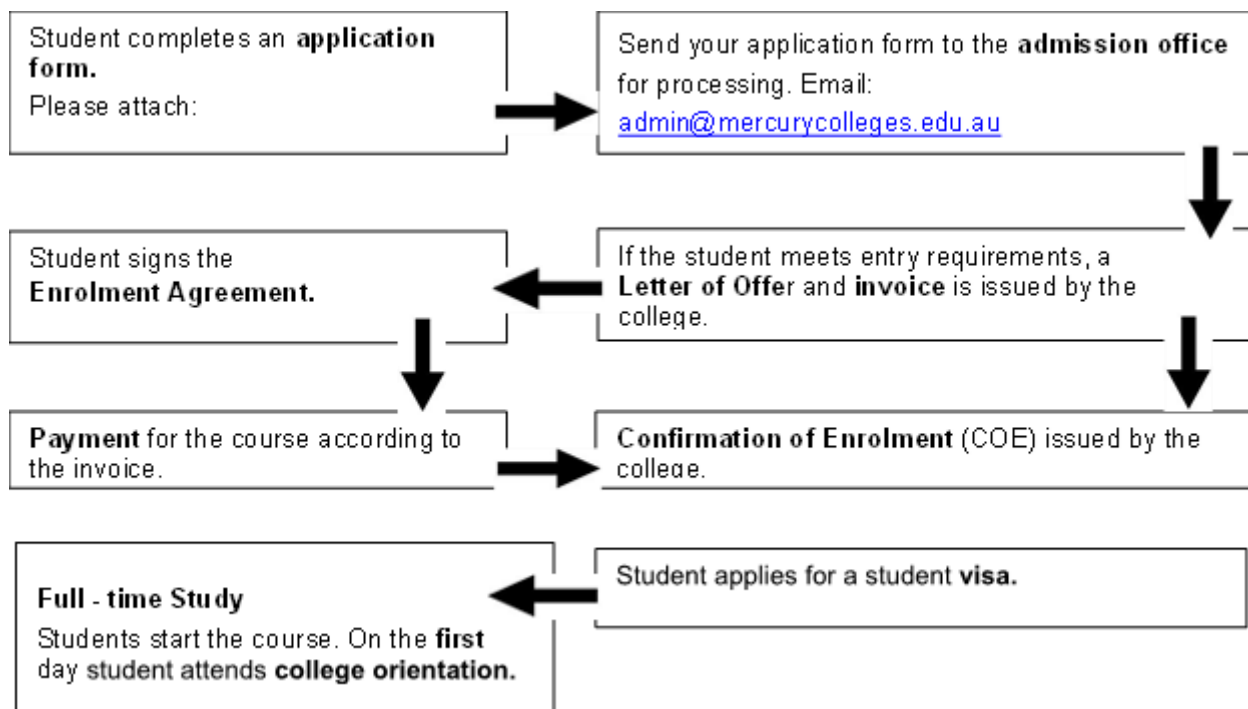
You are also expected to read through and abide by the Student Code of Conduct which is included in the next section below along with other important information. You can also find out more about the

ESOS Framework which protects your rights at: <https://www.studyaustralia.gov.au/en/life-in-australia/student-support-services/legal-rights-and-protections>

We look forward to welcoming you as a new student if you are not one already and wish you the best of luck in your studies and your time spent here in Australia!

## HOW CAN I APPLY?

The application process is outlined in the diagram below and please note if you are an ELICOS student you will also be required to complete an English Placement Test:



## POLICIES AND PROCESSES

### FEES AND REFUNDS

We want to make sure you understand all fees and charges associated with your course so please carefully read this section.

You can find out about the fees for a course on the Course Brochure and in addition all fees associated with your course are included in the Student Agreement. The Student Agreement also includes a detailed payment schedule and payment options, as well as your rights.

We will also tell you about the potential for fees and charges to change over the duration of their course, although it is unlikely that fees and charges will change.

We protect your fees at all times:

- by maintaining a sufficient amount in our account so we are able to repay all tuition fees already paid

- through our membership of the Tuition Protection Scheme (TPS). The role of the TPS is to assist international students where we are unable to fully deliver their course of study. The TPS ensures that you are able to either complete your studies in another course or with another education provider or receive a refund of your unspent tuition fees
- by not requiring you to pay more than 50% of course fees prior to commencement, except where a course is less than 26 weeks. However, you may choose to pay your fees in full or a greater amount than 50%. Please contact us if you would like to pay more than is documented in your student agreement.

Please note that the following fees can apply in addition to the fees advertised in the Course Brochure.

Non-tuition fees that may apply include:

NON-TUITION FEES THAT MAY APPLY	AMOUNT
Enrolment fee	\$200
Material fee (ELICOS)	1-12 weeks \$50 12+ weeks \$100
Material fee (VET – CHC only)	\$300
Credit transfer (VET)	\$250
RPL (VET)	\$250 per Unit of competency \$500 work placement
Work Placement arrangement fee (CHC) (additional after initial placement)	\$500
Student ID Card (hard-copy)	\$50
Express fee for document requests to be completed within 48h	\$50
Postage and handling fees	Within Australia: \$10, or Express \$20 International: \$50
ELICOS Exit Test Re-registration fee (30+ days from course end date)	\$150
Change of Class Request fee	\$80
Late-payment fee	\$100/month
Payment Plan Establishment fee	\$100 (subject to Management approval)
Re-issuance of certificate	\$100

NON-TUITION FEES THAT MAY APPLY	AMOUNT
Re-submission fee	\$250 per Unit of competency
Additional Statement of Attainment (SOA) or Testamur (hard-copy)	\$100
Re-issue fee for Testamurs/SOA issued after 02/2024	\$80 (soft-copy only)
Replacement Testamur/SOA	\$100 (91 days – 5 years from course end date)
Replacement Testamur/SOA	\$350 (5 years 1 day – 15 years from course end date)
Replacement Testamur /SOA	\$500 (15 years 1 day and after from course end date)
Enrolment Cancellation fee	\$350 (on/after commencement date of first course of enrolment)
Refund Administration fee	\$250 (including visa refusal cases)
Change of Start date	\$100 first request \$150 consecutive requests

You are required to pay all fees and charges by the date indicated on the invoice. Where you are unable to make a payment by the specified date, please contact us to discuss alternative arrangements.

All payments are to be made into the account specified on the invoice.

Where fees are overdue and you have not made alternative arrangements the notice of intention to report regarding non-payment of fees will be sent to you.

Following cancellation of enrolment due to non-payment of fees, your debt may be referred to a debt collection agency.

The College will not process any document requests from students with outstanding fees.

## REFUNDS

Please carefully read the following information about refunds. This applies whether you paid the fees or an education agent paid the fees and non-tuition fees on your behalf.

All application fees are non-refundable except where we cancel a course before it has started.

If we cancel a course either before or after it starts, you will receive an automatic refund and do not need to completion the Refund Application Form. The refund will be provided within 10 working days of the default. All refund requests, including visa refusals, attract an administration fee of \$250.

In all other circumstances, you should complete and submit a Refund Application Form which can be accessed from our office. This form must be submitted within 10 working days of the event that led to

the request for the refund. The outcome of the refund assessment will be forwarded to you within 20 working days, as well as any applicable refund.

Refunds will be paid to you or to the person or organisation who paid the course fees and will be paid in Australian Dollars.

The refund policy does not remove your right to take further action under Australian Consumer Law.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT REFUNDS

In addition to the above circumstances, refunds apply as follows:

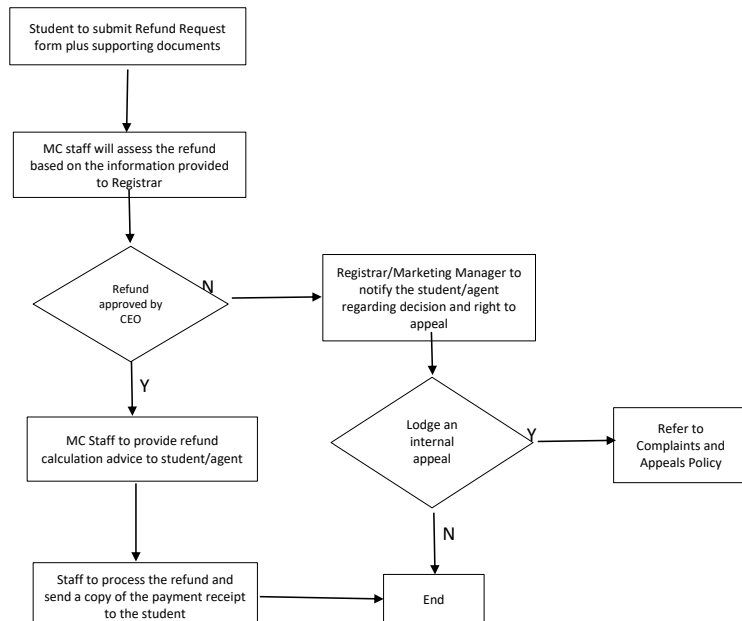
CIRCUMSTANCE	REFUND DUE
Mercury Colleges cancels course before commencement.	Full refund of all fees.
Mercury Colleges cancels course following commencement.	Refund of unused tuition fees will be calculated on a pro-rata basis (weekly as per the term calendar) minus any applicable deductions.
Mercury Colleges withdraws enrolment offer (The exception is when the offer was made on the basis of intentional incorrect information).	Full refund of tuition, materials and OSHC fees
A student's visa application is refused prior to commencement of the course (The student must provide a certified copy of the official letter of visa application rejection by the DHA)	Full refund of tuition, materials and OSHC fees.
A student's visa application is refused based on student default such as providing wrong or misleading information.	No refund of paid fees is issued.
If a student holds a valid student visa at the time of enrolment with Mercury Colleges, but after commencing their course, their current visa expires and a subsequent visa application is applied for and rejected.	Refund for any unused tuition fees paid to Mercury Colleges is calculated on a pro-rata basis (weekly as per the MC term calendar) minus any applicable deductions.
The CoE expires due to the applicant's failure to submit their visa application before the course commencement date.	No refund of paid fees is issued.
Student provides false or misleading information in application forms or during study.	Automatically disqualifies student from any refunds
Student is terminated due to serious breach of the College rules or a breach of visa conditions	No refund of paid fees is issued.

CIRCUMSTANCE	REFUND DUE
including non-attendance, unsatisfactory progress, misbehaviour or non-payment of fees	
Student is seeking a refund for enrolment after applying to complete the course earlier than they initially enrolled for.	Tuition fees are set based on the course enrolled and do not vary when a student applies to complete the course in a shorter duration than they initially enrolled in.
The student fails to either submit additional requested documentation or the completed refund request form within 90 days of receiving the offer letter, irrespective of the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) status.	No refund of paid fees is issued.
If a student withdraws from the course on or after the course commencement date.	The student will not be eligible for a refund of the fees for that term (excluding visa refusal cases where refund is calculated for unused tuition fees) applies. In subsequent packaged courses, the commencement date of the first course per initial application form submitted by the student is considered.
Withdrawal from a course on illness and compassionate grounds	Refund will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
Student transfers to a second course within Mercury Colleges without completing the first course.	Tuition fees paid for the first course may be pro-rated and credited toward the second course, subject to management approval. If the credit exceeds the first term fee, the balance will be applied to the next payment or refunded upon request within 20 business days. If the credit is less, the difference must be paid.
Student defers enrolment and commencement date	Refund will be assessed based on the original course start date
Refund request is received more than 30 days before the commencement date of the course.	Refund of tuition fees less 25 % and administration fee as set out in refund policy
Refund request is received more than 5 days but less than 30 days before commencement date of the course	Refund of tuition fees less 40% and administration fee as set out in refund policy
Refund request is received less than 5 days before commencement date of the course	Refund of tuition fees less 50% and administration fee as set out in refund policy

## REFUND PROCEDURE:

- You must complete the Refund Application Form and submit it to [admin@mercurycolleges.edu.au](mailto:admin@mercurycolleges.edu.au)
- Your refund will be processed within 4 weeks of receipt of your completed refund application if it includes all the required documents.
- A written statement will be provided to the student to explain how the refund is calculated.
- In the event of a visa refusal, the student must submit the visa refusal letter along with the refund application.

REFUNDS PROCESS FLOW CHART



## COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

We sincerely hope not, but from time to time you may be unhappy with the services we provide or want to appeal a decision we have made. We take your complaints and appeals seriously and will ensure in assessing them that we look at the causes and action that we can take to ensure it does not happen again/reduce the likelihood of it happening again.

Complaints can be made against us, our trainers and assessors and other staff, another learner of Mercury Colleges as well as any third party that provides services on our behalf such as education agents.

Complaints can be in relation to any aspect of our services.

Appeals can be made in respect of any decision made by Mercury Colleges. An appeal is a request for Mercury Colleges' decision to be reviewed in relation to a matter, including assessment appeals.

In managing complaints, we will ensure that the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaint process. This means that we will review each complaint or appeal in an objective and consistent manner and give everyone the opportunity to present their point of view.

Our internal complaints and appeals process can be accessed at no cost by prospective, current and former students.



We do encourage you to firstly seek to address the issue informally by discussing it with the person involved.

However, if you do not feel comfortable with this or you have tried this and did not get the outcome you wished you can access the formal complaints and appeals process.

If you want to make a complaint or appeal, you must:

- submit your complaint or appeal in writing using the complaints and appeals form. The complaints and appeals form outlines the information that should be provided and can be accessed from reception
- submit your complaint within 30 calendar days of the incident or in the case of an appeal within 30 calendar days of the decision being made.

We will acknowledge your complaint or appeal in writing within 3 working days of receipt.

We will commence reviewing your complaint or appeal within 5 working days of receiving the complaints.

Complaints and appeals will be finalised as soon as practicable or within 30 calendar days. However, where the complaint or appeal is expected to take more than 60 calendar days to process, Mercury Colleges will write to inform the complainant or appellant of this including the reasons for such. Following this update, regular updates will be provided of progress.

For assessment appeals, we will appoint an independent assessor to conduct a review of an assessment decision that is being appealed.

We will communicate the result of the complaints and appeals process to you in writing and this will include the reasons for the decision.

If at any time during the process you do need to come in for a meeting, you can have a support person of your choice present to assist you to resolve the complaint or appeal.

Generally, your enrolment will be maintained throughout any internal appeals process that concerns a decision to report you.

Additionally, if the appeal is against our decision to report you for unsatisfactory course progress or attendance, your enrolment will be maintained until the external process is completed and has supported or not our decision to report you.

If the appeal is against our decision to suspend or cancel your enrolment due to misbehaviour, this will not take effect until after the outcome of the internal appeals process.

Information about Mercury Colleges' complaints handling, including a copy of the complaints and appeals policy and complaints and appeals form will be published on the website.

## INDEPENDENT PARTIES

Where the internal process has failed to resolve the complaint or appeal, you will be able to take your case to the **Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO)**.

International students may complain to the OSO about a range of circumstances including:

- being refused admission to a course
- course fees and refunds
- being refused a course transfer

- course progress or attendance
- cancellation of enrolment
- accommodation or work arranged by Mercury Colleges
- incorrect advice given by an education agent
- taking too long in certain processes such as issuing results
- not delivering the services indicated in the Student Agreement.

More information can be found at:

<https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/complaints/international-student-complaints>

You can access these services at no cost in relation to matters that cannot be resolved through internal processes. Further information and contact details are included below.

We will cooperate in full with the OSO and will immediately implement their decisions or recommendations and/or take preventative or corrective action required by the decision or recommendation.

We will communicate all actions to you in writing based on the OSO's decision.

Complaints can also be made to the organisations indicated below:

#### **NATIONAL TRAINING COMPLAINTS HOTLINE:**

The National Training Complaints Hotline is a national service for consumers to register complaints concerning vocational education and training. The service refers consumers to the appropriate agency/authority/jurisdiction to assist with their complaint. Access to the Hotline is through:

Phone: 13 38 73, Monday–Friday, 8am to 6pm nationally

Online Complaints Form: <https://www.dewr.gov.au/national-training-complaints-hotline/national-training-complaints-hotline-complaints-form>

#### **AUSTRALIAN SKILLS QUALITY AUTHORITY (ASQA):**

Complainants may also complain to our registering body, Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). It is important to understand that ASQA does not act as an advocate for individual students and is not responsible for resolving disputes between students and training providers. ASQA only uses information from all complaints as intelligence to inform regulatory activities. More information can be found at:

<https://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints>

Nothing in this policy and procedure limits the rights of an individual to take action under Australia's Consumer Protection laws and it does not circumscribe an individual's rights to pursue other legal remedies.

## **COMPASSIONATE OR COMPELLING CIRCUMSTANCES**

You will find that many of our policies refer to compassionate and compelling circumstances so it is important to understand this term.

Compassionate and compelling circumstances are personal circumstances that:

- are involuntary and outside your control, for example, medical, family, wellbeing, or enrolment circumstances, and
- present you with limited or no choice.

They could include but are not limited to:

- unexpected severe illness or death of a family member
- you are involved in custody proceedings for your child
- you or an accompanying immediate family member has an acute medical condition requiring treatment
- you have been involved in legal proceedings where the timing is beyond your control
- you have been caught up in a natural disaster, political uprising, or other similar event
- you have an accident, fall seriously ill or contract a serious medical condition after arriving in Australia
- you witness or are the victim of a serious crime

## TERMS & STUDY PERIODS

Each study period consisting of 10 weeks (1 term) is followed by a 3-week term break.

## COURSE PROGRESS AND MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE

In order to maintain satisfactory course progress and attendance you must:

- attend all of your classes, with a minimum attendance of 50% expected
- satisfactorily complete all of your assessments
- actively participate in classes.

Your course progress will be monitored to make sure you are completing all of your assessments and actively participating in learning.

Your attendance will be recorded at the start and end of each class you attend and your attendance rate will be calculated weekly. Please note you cannot be absent for more than 5 consecutive days without approval for a leave of absence. If you are absent we will contact you via SMS, phone calls and emails.

We may assess that you are at risk of unsatisfactory course progress and/or attendance if you:

- have an overall result of Not Yet Competent result for a unit
- do not attend classes on a regular basis
- do not participate in learning activities within the classroom.

An exception may be made where you are attending at least 70% of the course contact hours and is maintaining satisfactory progress.

In this case we will contact you in writing and issue you with a First Warning Letter inviting you to attend a meeting with us to discuss your lack of progress and/or attendance and to agree on a plan to address this (an Intervention Strategy).

If following the First Warning Letter you either do not attend a meeting with us or continue to not make satisfactory course progress, we will send you a Second Warning Letter inviting you to attend a meeting with us to discuss your lack of progress and/or attendance and to possibly adjust the Intervention Strategy agreed on.

If following the Second Warning Letter you either do not attend a meeting with us or continue to not make satisfactory course progress, we will send you a Notice of Intention to Report for Unsatisfactory Course Progress/Attendance including the reasons for the notice. This will mean you may be reported to the Department of Home Affairs with the risk of your visa being cancelled. You may appeal this decision (see section on complaints and appeals) but you must do so within 20 days of receiving the notice.

We will only report unsatisfactory course progress or unsatisfactory course attendance if:

- the internal and external complaints processes have been completed and the decision or recommendation supports our original decision; or
- you do not appeal the decision within the 20-working day period; or
- you do not access an external complaints and appeals process: or
- you withdraw from the internal or external appeals processes by notifying us in writing.

Please note that extensions to your course duration specified on the CoE will be allowed:

- if you can provide evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances
- where you are participating in or about to participate in an intervention strategy because you are at risk of not meeting course progress or attendance requirements.

## SUMMARY OF COURSE PROGRESS NOTIFICATIONS

Early intervention reminder SMS/ Email notification At risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress	Students not attending are sent a notification warning of their attendance status.
Academic Intervention Invitation	An academic intervention invitation is sent to a student that are identified at the end of a block (5 weeks) as failing one unit.
Unsatisfactory Course Progress warning letter #1 by email/ letter First warning - If they do not meet satisfactory course progress for the study period (1 block)	Students fall below the 50% unit pass minimum set by the College at the end of the study period of 10 weeks are sent email /letter notification of their course progress in that term. The student is

	required to attend an intervention meeting at the College.
Unsatisfactory Course Progress warning letter #2 Unsatisfactory course progress at the end of 2nd consecutive study period – breaching visa conditions	Students fall below the 50% unit pass minimum set by the College at the end of the study period of 10 weeks are sent email /letter notification of their course progress in that term. The student is required to attend an intervention meeting at the College. This occurs at the end of the 2nd consecutive study period.
Letter of Intention to Report (ITR) to DHA for Unsatisfactory Course Progress #3	Despite intervention, possible no response to letters and no appeal process initiated by the students, means the College will escalate. Letter informs student of College's intention to report. States status of student's course progress then allows for appeals process. The student is allowed time for the internal and external appeals process (20 working days)
Report the student if no appeal has been made	Report to DHA via PRISMS

## SUMMARY OF ATTENDANCE NOTIFICATIONS

Notification to DHA – Non-commencement of a course within 4 weeks of the start date.	Where there is no attendance for 4 weeks and no response to communication at the start of a new course, the College will investigate, and this may be considered a visa breach by non-commencement of the course by the student. The agent will be contacted and warned and asked to locate the student. Where the student does not contact the College within 7 days, this will be reported through PRISMS. The CEO will make the final decision.
Attendance SMS notification/email Absent for 2 consecutive weeks	Students who are away for 2 consecutive weeks are sent mobile phone SMS/ Email notification advising their attendance status.

## INTENTION TO REPORT FOR UNSATISFACTORY COURSE PROGRESS -APPEAL PROCEDURE

If you have received an Intention to Report, you may choose to enter the appeals process to formally object to the College's intention to report you and cancel your enrolment. Please follow the steps below to lodge an appeal within 20 business of receiving the notice letter:

### ✓ **Complete and sign the Complaints and Appeals Form**

A copy of the form can be downloaded from the College's website or obtained by either contacting the Student Services Office (SSO) via email at [sso@mercurycolleges.edu.au](mailto:sso@mercurycolleges.edu.au), or visiting the SSO in person at Level 1, 245 Castlereagh Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

✓ **Complete and sign Authority to Release Form**

A copy of the form can be obtained by either contacting the Student Services Office (SSO) via email at [sso@mercurycolleges.edu.au](mailto:sso@mercurycolleges.edu.au), or visiting the SSO in person at Level 1, 245 Castlereagh Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

✓ **Book and attend a meeting with the Welfare Counsellor**

A meeting can be arranged by contacting the Student Services Office (SSO) via email at [sso@mercurycolleges.edu.au](mailto:sso@mercurycolleges.edu.au), **or** by visiting the SSO in person **at** Level 1, 245 Castlereagh Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

✓ **Book and attend a meeting with the Academic Manager**

A meeting can be arranged by contacting the Student Services Office (SSO) via email at [sso@mercurycolleges.edu.au](mailto:sso@mercurycolleges.edu.au), **or** by visiting the SSO in person **at** Level 1, 245 Castlereagh Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

✓ **Gather documentation to support your appeal's application**

All documents must be submitted in English or accompanied by a certified translation of the original.

## INTERVENTION – SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

When warning letters are sent out to students, the intervention meeting is offered and the student must attend this meeting. The intervention meeting is a chance to find out what is happening for the student and offer support. The support may include any or all of the support strategies:

- ✓ Academic counselling and a meeting with the Academic Support staff
- ✓ Counselling on course selection with Academic Support staff
- ✓ Welfare Counselling to clarify if personal situations are impacting on student results
- ✓ Sensitively exploring there are any compassionate or compelling reasons for the result
- ✓ The option of repeating a unit of study in a later term
- ✓ Transfer options for the student
- ✓ Clarification of student visa implications for continued unsatisfactory progress in the second study period
- ✓ The complaints and appeals process and the fact that the student has 20 working days in which to follow this up.
- ✓ The intervention meeting will be signed by the staff member and the student recorded in the students file. The record will be added to the student notes section in the database.

## INTERVENTION – COURSE EXTENSION

The course extension is an intervention method for students, including students on packaged courses, where the student is allowed to extend the course duration at additional cost to address their performance gaps and improve course progress to a satisfactory level which is the expected completion of the course to gain the full qualification.

These circumstances include:

- ✓ Where the student is on the intervention plan that requires course duration extension to undertake the necessary re-training and/or re-assessments

- ✓ The compassionate and compelling circumstances have been taken into consideration and the decision to extend course duration has been approved under these circumstances

## DEFERRING YOUR COURSE

Mercury Colleges allows you to defer your course. This means that your place is guaranteed but you can choose to delay the start of your course for up to 6 months.

To defer your course, you will need to complete a Deferral Request Form and provide evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances.

If your request is approved, you will receive a new Student Agreement including a revised start date.

It is important to check the impact on your visa by contact the Department of Home Affairs.

## SUSPENDING YOUR COURSE/LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Mercury Colleges allows you to suspend your course. This means that although you have commenced your studies you will be able to take a leave from your studies of up to 3 months.

To suspend your course, you will need to complete a Leave of Absence Form and provide evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances.

If your request is approved, you will receive a new Student Agreement including a revised start date.

It is important to check the impact on your visa by contact the Department of Home Affairs.

A leave of absence will not be approved if fees are unpaid or the student is not meeting the course requirements and/or pending for a successful Intention to Report appeal.

### How to apply for a Leave of Absence

You must complete and submit the Leave of Absence request form electronically and submit it to the Student Services Officer with supporting evidence for the application. Tuition fees must be paid until the end date of the leave of absence. The application will be assessed by the Student Services Manager who may refer you to the Welfare Counsellor. The Student Services Officer will advise the student if the application has been approved within a week of submission. The College considers requests of four weeks or longer.

### **Follow steps as listed below:**

1. Inform SSO about your intention to travel due to compassionate and compelling circumstances outside scheduled breaks and term breaks.
2. Complete the Leave of Absence application via Airslate along with supporting evidence.
3. Attend a meeting with the Welfare Counsellor if required by the Student Services Office.
4. Wait for the successful outcome before commencing your travels.

## DISCONTINUING YOUR STUDIES

You may decide that study is not for you and choose to discontinue your studies. Before you make a final decision, however, it's a good idea to talk to us to help you to make an informed decision. If you no longer wish to continue with your studies with us, then you must complete the Early Leave from Studies Form. Make sure you carefully read the Fees and Refunds information so that you know how

your decision affects your fees. Usually once you have commenced a study period (term) you won't be able to get a refund

## EARLY LEAVE FROM STUDIES - TRANSFERRING PROVIDER

If you wish to transfer to another RTO, English course provider or university within the first six months of your main course of study, you will need to apply for release from Mercury Colleges. If you wish to transfer after six months you do not need permission for release (although you will still need to complete a withdrawal form – see the section on deferral, suspension and cancellation).

For your application, the RTO or university you wish to transfer to must be registered with the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS). It is important to check this which you can do using the [CRICOS course and institution search](#).

Mercury Colleges will approve your request for transfer if:

- the course is academically unsuitable for you because you are not able to achieve satisfactory course progress at the level you are studying despite participating in an agreed Intervention Strategy
- you can prove that you need the transfer because of compassionate or compelling circumstances
- the course outlined in your Student Agreement has not been delivered
- you provide evidence that your reasonable expectations about the course are not being met
- you provide evidence of being misled by Mercury Colleges or by an education or migration agent, regarding the Mercury Colleges or the course, and the course is therefore unsuitable.

Mercury Colleges will not approve your request if:

- you do not provide satisfactory evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances
- you cannot show that you have been participating in the agreed Intervention Strategy in order to achieve satisfactory course progress
- you have unpaid course fees for the current study period
- the transfer would put your progression through a package of courses at risk
- you require access to particular support services that have not yet been provided or offered to you.

## EARLY LEAVE FROM STUDIES – CHANGE OF VISA

If you no longer hold a student visa or are required to fulfill study requirements, you may choose to request the cancellation of your enrolment.

It is important to note that a change of visa does not automatically terminate your enrolment with college. It is your responsibility to report any change in circumstances.

**Evidence required:** Visa Grant Notification specifying the change in visa obligations.



## EARLY LEAVE FROM STUDIES – RETURNING TO YOUR HOME COUNTRY

If you are planning to return to your home country for good it is important to note that it is your responsibility to inform the College about your decision and to take necessary action to finalise the process.

Leaving the country does not automatically terminate your enrolment with college. It is your responsibility to report any change in circumstances.

**Evidence required:** One-way air ticket to your home country, evidence of the submission of the 1194 form (Request to Cancel your student visa)

## HOW TO APPLY FOR EARLY LEAVE FROM STUDIES

- Notify our Student Services Office of your intention to transfer provider and complete electronic Early leave from Studies link via Airlate.
- You must complete the Early Leave from Studies application and submit the requested supporting documents within 5 working days from receiving the request for more information (RFI)
- Pay the cancellation fee of \$350 and wait for the outcome of your application. Should you not be satisfied with the outcome, you can appeal the college's decision

You will receive a notice advising you of the outcome within 10 working days of receipt of the form and valid enrolment offer. Where the request is granted, the release is processed and recorded electronically where applicable. It is important for you to contact the DHA to seek advice on whether a new student visa is required. For refunds referring to withdrawal request prior to the start date of your first course, all refunds associated with course transfer will be in accordance with our Fees and Refunds policy.

## APPEALING THE DECISION

If your application is unsuccessful, you will be advised in writing and you can access our Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure to appeal the decision within 20 working days of receipt of the decision.

We will not finalise the refusal until the appeal process is complete and either finds in our favour or until the 20-working day period in which you can access the complaints and appeals process has passed.

## TRANSFERRING COURSES WITH MERCURY COLLEGES

Mercury Colleges offers students the options to transfer to other courses within Mercury Colleges. Mercury Colleges *will* approve your request for transfer if you can show that:

- the course better meets your study capabilities and/or long-term goals
- you provide evidence that your reasonable expectations about the course are not being met.

Mercury Colleges *will not* approve your request if:

- the transfer would put your progression through a package of courses at risk
- you require access to particular support services that have not yet been provided or offered to you
- there is evidence that you are trying to avoid being reported to DHA for failure to meet the provider's attendance or academic progress requirements
- you have unpaid course fees for the current study period.

## HOW TO APPLY

If you wish to apply to transfer to another course, you must complete the Change of Study Plan Form. The form will require you to include a statement of your reasons for seeking release.

You will receive a notice advising you of the outcome within 10 working days of receipt of the form. Where the request is granted, a new CoE will be provided to you. It is important for you to contact the DHA to seek advice on whether a new student visa is required.

An administration fee to action the change applies and you have to pay the difference in fees. You must satisfy the entry requirements for the new course. You may be asked to attend a meeting with the Academic Manager and the request is assessed under consideration of the best interest of the student. The request is subject to approval by the CEO and/or Academic Manager.

## APPEALING THE DECISION

If your application for internal transfer is unsuccessful, you will be advised in writing and you can access our Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure to appeal the decision within 20 working days of receipt of the decision..

## SUSPENDING OR CANCELLING YOUR ENROLMENT

It is important to understand that your enrolment may be cancelled or suspended by us in a range of circumstances:

- Misbehaviour (i.e., not abiding by the Student Code of Conduct as outlined in this Handbook).
- Not paying your course fees.
- Not making satisfactory course progress or attending classes as set out in this Handbook.

Where any of the above circumstances apply you will be contacting in writing to inform you of the intended suspension or cancellation and the reasons for this.

You will be given the opportunity to access our Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure to appeal the decision within 20 working days of receipt of the decision.

We will report you to until the internal appeal process is complete, unless your health and wellbeing or that of others could be at risk.

It is important for you to contact the DHA to seek advice on your student visa.

## HOW THE NCVER AND OTHER BODIES HANDLE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

The NCVER will collect, hold, use and disclose your personal information in accordance with the law, including the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) (Privacy Act) and the NVET Act. Your personal information may be used and disclosed by NCVER for purposes that include populating authenticated VET transcripts; administration of VET; facilitation of statistics and research relating to education, including surveys and data linkage; and understanding the VET market.

The NCVER is authorised to disclose information to the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), Commonwealth authorities, State and Territory authorities (other than registered training organisations) that deal with matters relating to VET and VET regulators for the purposes of those bodies, including to enable:

- administration of VET, including program administration, regulation, monitoring and evaluation
- facilitation of statistics and research relating to education, including surveys and data linkage
- understanding how the VET market operates, for policy, workforce planning and consumer information.

The NCVER may also disclose personal information to persons engaged by NCVER to conduct research on NCVER's behalf.

The NCVER does not intend to disclose your personal information to any overseas recipients. For more information about how the NCVER will handle your personal information please refer to the NCVER's Privacy Policy at [www.ncver.edu.au/privacy](http://www.ncver.edu.au/privacy).

If you would like to seek access to or correct your information, in the first instance, please contact us using the contact details listed below.

DEWR is authorised by law, including the Privacy Act and the NVETR Act, to collect, use and disclose your personal information to fulfil specified functions and activities. For more information about how DEWR will handle your personal information, please refer to the DEWR VET Privacy Notice at <https://www.dewr.gov.au/national-vet-data/vet-privacy-notice>.

We may be required to provide your personal information to the Tuition Protection Scheme (TPS). The TPS may disclose your personal to third parties in accordance with their privacy policy, including but not limited to:

- a contracted service provider engaged by the TPS Director to assist in the performance of the TPS Director's statutory functions;
- education providers to facilitate replacement course arrangements;
- government departments, including the Service Delivery Office within the Department of Finance (Finance), the department, Department of Home Affairs, Services Australia, Overseas Student Ombudsman, VSL Ombudsman, Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, Australian Skills Quality Agency and the Australian Government Actuary.

## SURVEYS

You may receive a student survey which may be run by a government department or an NCVER employee, agent, third-party contractor or another authorised agency. Please note you may opt out of the survey at the time of being contacted.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

At any time, you may contact Mercury Colleges to:

- request access to your personal information
- correct your personal information
- make a complaint about how your personal information has been handled
- ask a question about this Privacy Notice.

Please contact us using the contact details provided at the beginning of this Handbook. If you would like to view a copy of our privacy policy and associated procedures, let us know and we will provide this to you.

## PRIVACY AND ACCESS TO RECORDS (VET STUDENTS)

### WHY WE COLLECT YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

As a registered training organisation (RTO), we collect your personal information so we can process and manage your enrolment in a vocational education and training (VET) course with us. If you do not provide this information, we will be unable to process your enrolment.

### HOW WE USE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

We use your personal information to enable us to deliver VET courses to you, and otherwise, as needed, to comply with our obligations as an RTO.

## HOW WE DISCLOSE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

We are required by law (under the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 (Cth) (NVETR Act)) to disclose the personal information we collect about you to the National VET Data Collection kept by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd (NCVER). The NCVER is responsible for collecting, managing, analysing and communicating research and statistics about the Australian VET sector.

We are also authorised by law (under the NVETR Act) to disclose your personal information to the relevant state or territory training authority.

## HOW THE NCVER AND OTHER BODIES HANDLE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

The NCVER will collect, hold, use and disclose your personal information in accordance with the law, including the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) (Privacy Act) and the NVETR Act. Your personal information may be used and disclosed by NCVER for purposes that include populating authenticated VET transcripts; administration of VET; facilitation of statistics and research relating to education, including surveys and data linkage; and understanding the VET market.

The NCVER is authorised to disclose information to the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), Commonwealth authorities, State and Territory authorities (other than registered training organisations) that deal with matters relating to VET and VET regulators for the purposes of those bodies, including to enable:

- administration of VET, including program administration, regulation, monitoring and evaluation
- facilitation of statistics and research relating to education, including surveys and data linkage
- understanding how the VET market operates, for policy, workforce planning and consumer information.

The NCVER may also disclose personal information to persons engaged by NCVER to conduct research on NCVER's behalf.

The NCVER does not intend to disclose your personal information to any overseas recipients. For more information about how the NCVER will handle your personal information please refer to the NCVER's Privacy Policy at [www.ncver.edu.au/privacy](http://www.ncver.edu.au/privacy).

If you would like to seek access to or correct your information, in the first instance, please contact us using the contact details listed below.

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We may be required to provide your personal information to the Tuition Protection Scheme (TPS). The TPS may disclose your personal to third parties in accordance with their privacy policy, including but not limited to:

- a contracted service provider engaged by the TPS Director to assist in the performance of the TPS Director's statutory functions;
- education providers to facilitate replacement course arrangements;

- government departments, including the Service Delivery Office within the Department of Finance (Finance), the department, Department of Home Affairs, Services Australia, Overseas Student Ombudsman, VSL Ombudsman, Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, Australian Skills Quality Agency and the Australian Government Actuary.

## STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The following information outlines what's expected of you.

### YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

#### POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

You are expected to:

- read and follow our policies as documented in this Handbook
- respond to our communications promptly
- advise us within 7 days of any change of contact details including current residential address, mobile number, email address and who to contact in the event of an emergency.

#### LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

You are expected to:

- attend scheduled classes
- actively participate in learning
- complete all homework given to you
- complete and submit all assessments on time
- refrain from plagiarism, cheating and collusion
- pay all fees due
- ask for support if needed.

#### CLASSROOM CONDUCT

You are expected to:

- arrive on time for your class
- be prepared for class
- dress appropriately
- only use handheld devices in class when relevant to the activity
- communicate in English.

#### RESPECT AND ETHICS

You are expected to:

- respect others' values and beliefs
- interact with others in a collaborative, professional manner
- use our resources for the purpose for which they are intended
- refrain from harassment and discrimination of any kind
- resolve any conflicts calmly
- respect ours and other people's property.

## YOUR RIGHTS

### POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

You can expect to:

- be informed of our policies and associated procedures
- receive regular and relevant communications
- learn in a safe environment
- have your personal details kept confidential and secure
- access the information that we hold about you
- have the opportunity to provide feedback on services received.

### LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

You can expect to:

- be provided with high quality training, assessment and support services
- receive the support you need
- have your assessments marked and returned within 10 working days of submission
- receive feedback on assessments where the result is not satisfactory.

### CLASSROOM CONDUCT

You can expect your trainer and assessor to:

- be on time for classes
- be prepared for class
- be knowledgeable and engaging
- dress appropriately
- only use handheld devices in class when they are relevant to the activity
- communicate in English.

## RESPECT AND ETHICS

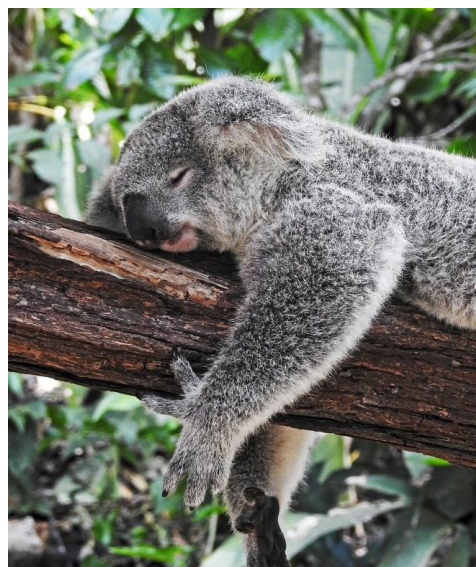
You can expect:

- to have your values and beliefs respected
- to be treated fairly and equitably by staff and students
- to interact with others in a collaborative, professional manner
- respect for yourself and your property.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT AUSTRALIA

### LIVING AND STUDYING IN AUSTRALIA

Australia is one of the world leaders in education and home to almost 700,000 international students. It's a great place to live and study as Australia has some of the lowest crime rates in the world with lots of open spaces, beautiful parks and wildlife, golden surf beaches and vibrant cities and night life. Australia is a welcoming and friendly country toward overseas visitors and our national values include individual freedoms along with protection of the rights of citizens and visitors with a transparent legal system in place. We are a multi-cultural and diverse nation with a thriving mix of regional and city centres providing a variety of landscapes and opportunities. Australia is a technologically advanced nation with great infrastructure and transportation options for students and being a country with one of the highest minimum wage rates – Australia is really a fantastic place to live and study.



*This information has been sourced from Study in Australia provided by the Australian Government. If you would like more information about a specific topic, please visit the website: <https://www.studyaustralia.gov.au/en>*

### COST OF LIVING

For a specific breakdown of accommodation and other living costs, please refer to <https://www.studyaustralia.gov.au/en/life-in-australia/living-and-education-costs> and make use of the cost of living calculator provided by Insider Guides at <https://insiderguides.com.au/cost-of-living-calculator/>.



## ACCOMMODATION

There are a variety of accommodation options in Australia to suit every need, preference and budget. This includes, renting, purpose-built student accommodation, short-term accommodation like hotels and hostels, share houses or home stays. For detailed information about the various types of accommodation and legal obligations and rights for renting in each state and territory, please visit <https://www.studyaustralia.gov.au/en/life-in-australia/accommodation>.



## TRANSPORT

Australia has great public transport options including trains, buses, taxis and other ride share options like Uber and Didi. Australia also has many cycling and walking paths and its affordable domestic flight travel means that you may like to take advantage of your time here by seeing more of the sights.



## HEALTH AND SAFETY

Australia is generally a safe country, but you do need to be aware of the risks and be prepared. Make sure you read the information provided at the link on the following topics:

- Emergencies
- Home safety
- Fire
- Transport and personal
- Sun and water.

## PLACES OF WORSHIP

There is complete freedom of religion in Australia. Most of the world religions are represented in Sydney and have their own places of worship. These can be found in the Sydney White Pages, listed alphabetically under the denomination: <https://www.whitepages.com.au/>. The majority of Australians are Christian, the three largest denominations being Anglican, Roman Catholic and Uniting Church. Smaller Christian denominations include Lutheran, Jehovah's Witness, Seventh Day Adventist, and Baptist. Other major religions with a great many adherents in Australia include Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Taoism.

## WORKING ON A STUDENT VISA

Student visa holders can work up to 48 hours every two weeks (fortnight) during study terms and unlimited hours during school holiday breaks. For more information on popular industries for students

to work in, your rights and responsibilities, your employer's rights and information about the Fair Work Ombudsman visit: <https://www.studyaustralia.gov.au/en/work-in-australia>.

## OVERSEAS STUDENT HEALTH COVER (OHSC)

You must have student healthcare cover before arriving in Australia and for the duration of time you are in Australia – this is a visa requirement of the Department of Home Affairs. For further information about OHSC and other optional insurances visit <https://www.studyaustralia.gov.au/en/plan-your-move/overseas-student-health-cover-oshc>.

## EMERGENCY CONTACTS AND OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS AND INFORMATION

### EMERGENCY SERVICES

Dial 000 and advise whether you require:

- police
- fire
- ambulance.



### POLICE STATION

The nearest police station is:

Day Street Police Station

Address: 192 Day Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Phone: (02) 9265 6499

Website: [NSW Police](#)

### DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS (DHA)

Address: 101 George Street, Parramatta NSW 2150

Phone: 13 18 81

Website: <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/>>

### MEDICAL FACILITIES NEAR CAMPUS

The closest hospital to campus with an Accident and Emergency Department is:

Sydney Hospital and Sydney Eye Hospital

Address: 8 Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Phone: (02) 9382 7111

Website: [Sydney Eye Hospital](#)

The closest medical centre is:

Key Health CBD South - Sydney Medical Centre

Address: Ground Floor, 281 Elizabeth St, Sydney NSW 2000

Phone: (02) 8262 1000

Website: <https://www.keyhealth.com.au/cbd-south>

## LEGAL COUNSELLING SERVICE NEAR CAMPUS

Legal Aid NSW Central Sydney Office

Address: 323 Castlereagh Street Haymarket NSW 2000

Phone: (02) 921905000

Website: [www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au)

## TRANSPORT SERVICES

NSW Public Transport: <https://transportnsw.info/>>

## BANKING SERVICES

- **Commonwealth Bank**  
[www.commbank.com.au](http://www.commbank.com.au)
- **Westpac Bank**  
[www.westpac.com.au](http://www.westpac.com.au)
- **ANZ Bank**  
[www.anz.com.au](http://www.anz.com.au)

## TAXI COMPANY

Black and White Cabs

Phone: 133 222

Website: <https://www.blackandwhitecabs.com.au>

## CRISIS SUPPORT

### LIFELINE 13 11 14

Lifeline provide a 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention service. If you are thinking about suicide or are experiencing a personal crisis, call Lifeline for immediate support.



### BEYOND BLUE 1300 22 4636

Beyond Blue provide support services to those who need support and may be affected by anxiety, depression or suicidal thoughts. They can be contacted by phone, online chat support or via email. Visit their site: [www.beyondblue.com.au](http://www.beyondblue.com.au).



See a range of help lines and websites at <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/national-help-lines-and-websites> including mental health, groups who may experience discrimination, kids helpline, Relationships Australia and Headspace.