



Student Support Services Policy and Procedure

1 Policy

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

2 Purpose

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This policy ensures that Riverdale Institute (RI) complies with:

- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011
- National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Standard 6)
- Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2025 – Outcome Standards (Standard 2).

3 Scope

This policy applies to support services available to Riverdale Institute's students.

4 Definitions

Compassionate or Compelling circumstances the circumstances which are beyond the control of the overseas student, and which have an impact upon the overseas student's course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but are not limited to:

- serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the overseas student was unable to attend classes
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible a death certificate should be provided)
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel
- and this has impacted on the overseas student's studies; or
- a traumatic experience, which could include:
 - involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or
 - witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, and this has impacted on the overseas student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports) where the registered provider was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit, or the overseas student has failed a prerequisite unit and therefore faces a shortage of relevant units for which they are eligible to enrol.

These are only some examples of what may be considered compassionate or compelling circumstances.

RI will be assessing the circumstances of the students while taking them into consideration.





5 Requirements and Process

Role of the Student Support Officer (SSO) in Supporting Students

RI is committed to ensuring that all staff members who directly interact with students understand the obligations under the ESOS framework and the potential implications for students. This critical information is communicated during staff meetings and integrated into RI's policies.

Students have unlimited access to our student support services through the SSO, as well as local welfare services. If a student's concern exceeds the SSO's expertise, they will be referred to a qualified professional for assistance.

The SSO addresses inquiries related to student progress, course requirements, satisfactory attendance, and will refer students to other staff as necessary. Additionally, the SSO provides guidance on accommodation and general welfare issues. They are authorised to refer students to professional welfare assistance, such as social workers or legal aid. The SSO will document all support services provided to each student and ensure these details are included in the student's file.

5.1 Needs identification

Student needs are identified through:

- Analysing the possible needs of the target group and considering their needs in relation to the delivery model throughout the course design and review process
- Information provided by the student on the application and/or enrolment forms.
- Discussion with the student during their Pre-training Review.
- Assessment of the formal language, literacy and numeracy skills test which is given to each student upon commencement of the course.
- Discussion with the student during their induction to the program.

5.2 Provision of learning and support services

The following support services are available and accessible for all students studying at RI. RI provides students with contact details to refer any matters that require further follow up with qualified professionals. Any referrals are conducted by RI at no cost to the student but may apply where an external service is used by the student. The service fees and charges should be clarified by the student prior to using any services outside of RI. RI assists students to adjust to study and life in Australia, including through the provision of an age and culturally appropriate orientation program that includes information about:
Student support services available to students in the transition to life and study in a new environment.

5.3 Legal services

RI can provide some advice and guidance on a limited range of situations. Where the SSO feels it appropriate for you to gain professional legal advice they will refer you to an appropriate legal professional. RI will not charge for a referral.

5.4 Academic issues

Students may have concerns with their attendance, academic performance or other related issues that are placing them at risk of not achieving the requirements of their course. Students can gain advice and support to ensure they maintain appropriate academic progress and attendance levels, as well as general support to ensure they achieve satisfactory results in their studies. All students' progress and attendance are monitored and guidance and support provided where non satisfactory results are identified. A student is able to access the SSO to discuss





any academic, attendance, or other related issues to studying at RI at any time. The SSO will be able to provide advice and guidance, or referral, where required. There is no additional charge for this service.

5.5 Tutoring support

During the training and assessment, if it is identified that student is at risk of not completing the qualification within the expected duration, RI will arrange extra academic support for the student.

- It may be in the form of extra tutoring or providing extra time to complete the assessment. Extra tutoring will be free of cost.
- Additional or supplementary resources to support learning goals such as readings, links or activities
- Development of an individual support plan to meet student needs
- One on one support from the trainer/assessor
- Supporting those with additional needs by making reasonable adjustments to suit needs if possible
- Technical Support with technology.

5.6 Financial support services

Students are encouraged to contact the SSO to discuss any concerns in relation to their finances. RI can make easy monthly instalment plans. Students will not be charged to get into the instalment.

If students are experiencing a problem at RI, they should first talk to our staff. If informal discussions do not resolve the problem, they can lodge a formal complaint. RI maintains a complaint register and has a documented process for complaint and appeals.

If students feel they have a legitimate complaint that is not being recognised by RI, they should approach the Australian Human Rights Commission.

Students can make a confidential enquiry over the phone, but they must lodge a formal complaint in writing before the commission can take action. Find out more about disability rights in Australia at <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights>.

Ref: <https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/english/live-in-australia/support-services>

5.7 Personal and social issues

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

5.8 Counselling services

The counselling service Lifeline (13 11 44) is available 24/7. Students do not need a referral. <https://www.lifeline.org.au/get-help/topics/lifeline-services>

5.9 Mental Health support

Following information has been taken from the Council of International students Australia "<https://cisa.edu.au/taking-care-of-your-mental-health/>"





"Being an international student studying in Australia can be quite stressful. It is important to make sure student is taking care of himself/herself. Not just physically but also emotionally and mentally. Here are a few tips to reducing your stress while you are studying.

- Find an activity or exercise at a gym! Examples include taking regular walks in individual's neighbourhood, joining a boot camp, or joining a non-competitive community sports team.
- Eat healthy! Check out a great resource.
- Learn Mindfulness. Learning how to meditate can be hard to do by yourself. But there are some great apps that have guided meditation tracks. Find a list of popular ones here.
- Charge your electronic devices away from your bed!
- Listen to music!
- Call your friends and family from your home country!
- Take some time to clean your room!
- Take a long shower or bath!
- Watch a new film or television show!
- Buy a plant!
- Your institution might have other information how to deal with stress.

It is okay to be sad sometimes, however, sometimes we need extra help to get back on our feet! Don't just ignore it! If stress gets too overwhelming, don't be afraid to get extra help. Sometimes talking to a professional is the only way you can feel better.

If you ever feel like you are going to hurt yourself, call "000" right away or head to emergency.

Suicide Call Back Service (free service providing 24/7 phone and online counselling to people affected by suicide): 1300 659 467 www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au

Lifeline (crisis support and suicide prevention hotline): 131 114 www.lifeline.org.au

MensLine Australia (Free telephone and online counselling offering support for Australian men): 1300 78 99 78 www.mensline.org.au

SANE Australia (support for people living with complex mental health conditions): 1800 187 263 www.sane.org.au

Headspace (Free mental health and wellbeing support for young people): www.headspace.org.au

13Yarn (Culturally safe and confidential helpline for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people) : 139 276 www.13yarn.org.au

The Orange Door (Family safety wellbeing service) : 1800 312 820 www.orangedoor.vic.gov.au

QLife (peer-support and referral service for LGBTIA+ communities): 1800 184 527 [www.qlife.org.au](http://www qlife.org.au)

Beyond Blue (Support for depression, anxiety and general wellbeing): (03) 9810 6100 www.beyondblue.org.au

5.10 Accommodation

While RI does not offer accommodation services or take any responsibility for accommodation arrangements, the SSO of RI is able to refer students to appropriate accommodation services and is always available to discuss any issues or concerns a student may have with their accommodation





arrangements. All students are encouraged to have accommodation organised prior to arrival in Australia but the SSO can refer students to appropriate accommodation services. RI will not charge for a referral.

Housing and tenancy services

Students can always contact the SSO for housing and tenancy concerns. SSO can guide them and provide information about the relevant bodies or websites. Students can refer to <https://tenantsvic.org.au/advice/different-tenancies/international-students/> for further information on tenancy and housing services.

5.11 Career services

- RI has dedicated student support officers, who will be the point of contact for the students.
- Students can discuss or seek advice from SSO in relation to their career.
- Students can seek an appointment with SSO to discuss career options or advice
- SSO will advise the students according to his/her capacity, if SSO does not find himself/herself able to address the query at his/her own level, SSO will be contacting the senior staff at RI.
- SSO can also refer students to Qualified Education Agent Counsellor.
- SSOs can help the students to make resume and refer to the job websites.
- Students can also discuss the learning outcome and career after completion of the enrolled course.
- Students can refer to <https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/English/Live-in-Australia/work> for further information in relation to work and their rights.
- Students can refer to <https://www.myskills.gov.au/>.

5.12 Medical issues

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

Emergency Help Australian Health Management 24-hour - 1800 006 745.

Emergency and health services

On-campus health services:

First aid, a first aid officer is available on campus.

Emergency services — triple zero (000)

Is someone seriously injured or in need of urgent medical help?

Is your life or property being threatened?

Have you just witnessed a serious accident or crime?

If you answered YES, call Triple Zero (000). Calls to Triple Zero are free.

The emergency phone number for an ambulance in Australia is '000. (This number should only be dialled in an emergency, and you require immediate assistance from the ambulance, police, or fire brigade.). Visit the Triple Zero website (<https://www.triplezero.gov.au/pages/default.aspx>) | information.

Health and disability services

Australia has laws to protect individuals from discrimination in many areas of public life. A person with a disability has just as much right to study as an able-bodied student. RI will not:

- refuse admission to a student with a disability
- ask a student with a disability to meet requirements that do not apply to able-bodied students (for example, pay higher fees)





- deny or limit access to a student with a disability (for example, not allowing them to go on excursions, or having student common rooms or lecture facilities that are not accessible).

Students are required to disclose the disability during the admission and enrolment process.

If you have specific needs, you should contact RI several weeks before you arrive to make the appropriate arrangements. RI will make every effort to accommodate a student with a disability.

However, the institution is not legally required to make modifications the changes involve major difficulties or incur unreasonable costs. The institution has to prove the changes are unjustified. Before making such a claim, the institution will have direct discussions with the student and seek expert advice.

5.13 Language, Literacy and Numeracy support

Riverdale Institute is committed to supporting students with the successful completion of their studies and the development of the skills and learning that they want to achieve in their enrolment.

As part of this RI assesses the student's language and literacy skills prior to the commencement of the course. This assessment is conducted to identify in advance, any support that individuals may need to successfully complete the course.

RI Academic staff have established the required Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) levels for each course. Where a student doesn't meet the course levels, they will be consulted, and a Support Plan will be developed to suit their needs. This plan is monitored to ensure that the support provided is effective. Adjustments may be made in consultation with the student as the course progresses.

Additional Learner supports may include:

- Additional learning resources access (including ICT),
- Mobility and access flexibility
- Language, Literacy, and Numeracy (LLN) Support: Access to LLN programs or referrals to specialised services to assist learners in improving essential skills.
- Support at the workplace during practical placement
- Mental health support, and service referral
- Addressing other circumstances that could impact student course progress in a timely manner.
- Where a student has been identified for support, the Trainer/Assessor is advised in advance to ensure the plan can be effective.

If a student is found to need additional literacy and numeracy (LLN) support and this was not identified at the time of their application, then their trainer/assessor may give them extra time and support. If the LLN deficiency clearly inhibits the student's ability to complete their course, then they may be advised to defer their course and to enrol in a suitable English course. Upon completion of this English course, they can resume their original studies.

Reasonable Adjustment

The Anti-Discrimination Act uses the principle of reasonable adjustment to ensure that people with disabilities are treated equally. This means that 'reasonable' adjustments must be made wherever possible; to meet the needs of a student with a disability.

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

- Make training and assessment materials and methods more accessible.
- Training and assessment methods that suit most students may hinder access for some students with a disability.
- RI is able to present information through a range of methods to assist students with a disability.
- Adapt the physical environment and equipment to better suit the student with disability.
- Students requiring reasonable adjustment, should speak to their Trainer or the SSO.





5.14 Student orientation program

An orientation program (induction) is conducted before Institute's classes begin. Attendance is compulsory for all international students. The program includes an introduction to Riverdale Institute, its services and facilities as well as an introduction to Australian culture, society and life. Students are also introduced to the academic culture and rules of the Institute that are necessary for successful study.

The orientation program also involves social activities, which will help students to meet other students and familiarise with the Institute and surroundings.

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

The orientation program will provide information about:

- Support services available to assist overseas students to help them adjust to study and life in Australia
- English language and study assistance programs
- Any relevant legal services
- Emergency and health services
- Riverdale's facilities and resources
- Complaints and appeals processes
- Requirements for course attendance and progress, as appropriate
- The support services available to assist overseas students with general or personal
- Circumstances that are adversely affecting their education in Australia; and
- Services overseas students can access for information on their employment rights and conditions, and how to resolve workplace issues, such as through the Fair Work Ombudsman.

Along with general orientation activities, new students may have needs or issues requiring specific support and interventions. At RI, it is mandatory for new students to attend the orientation and sign the orientation and induction pack.

For those students who have enrolled in a qualification that requires vocational placement the orientation week will also include sessions regarding placement information and requirements. During these sessions, the units of competency related to placement will be discussed/opened by the relevant trainers to provide an understanding on what the practical tasks and observations will be.

Whilst all staff employed by RI have the responsibility to provide support to all students, RI shall nominate a 'SSO' (Student Support Officer) who shall be available to all students, on an appointment basis, during the standard RI business hours.

Students can contact the SSO on 1800 902 480 anytime in case of emergency.

6 Procedure

1. Providing Information About Suitable Support Services

A. Analyse the Needs of the Cohort

During the course development process the academic staff / coordinator, assess the typical support needs of the cohort and detail these in the Training and Assessment Strategy. Consider whether the target group is likely to have:





- Low levels of language, literacy, and numeracy (LLN)
- Low digital literacy
- Disability or medical concerns
- Cultural, social, or economic issues
- Limitations in access to resources (e.g., finances, time, support)

B. Determine Suitable Support Services

The RTO Operations Manager will identify internal and external learning and support services that are appropriate and available. Consider:

- Available support services listed in this policy.
- How RI can facilitate student success while adhering to the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence.
- Previous feedback regarding support services.
- Methods for students to access information and services.
- Regular communication with students and relevant stakeholders (e.g., workplace hosts, supervisors).
- Student rights as outlined in the *Student Code of Conduct*.
- Once support services are confirmed, publish details in the Student Handbook and Orientation materials. Update documentation and the External Support Services Register annually, ensuring relevance to the cohort. Contact providers for promotional materials as needed.

2. Implement Support Staff Arrangements

To implement support staff arrangements, the Operations Manager will assess student numbers to determine adequate staffing levels. Roles and responsibilities for support personnel will be clearly defined in position descriptions, ensuring that all staff understand their roles and receive appropriate training, including cross-cultural training if relevant. Additionally, staff will receive regular updates on support information, and training sessions related to their functions will be organised as needed.

3. Individual Needs Identification

A. Student Applies to Enrol

When a completed Enrolment Form is received, the Enrolment officer / Student Support Officer will review it to identify any noted student support needs. If any needs are identified, the officer will notify the CEO, who will address these concerns during the course entry interview.

B. Entry Interview

During the pre-training interview, the Enrolment officer will follow up on any support needs indicated in the enrolment form and explore additional support requirements that may arise. All identified support needs will be documented. Additionally, an LLN assessment will be administered to evaluate the student's language, literacy, and numeracy levels before the course commencement. Based on the assessment results, the officer may consult the academic staff to determine if the student possesses the necessary skills for course enrolment and whether additional support is required.

C. Individual Support Plans

For students with identified support needs, the Operations Manager will create an Individual Support Plan detailing the strategies to provide additional support beyond standard offerings. This may include:

- Referrals to relevant courses or adult learning materials





- Access to resources such as computers, Wi-Fi, books, or journals
- Supplementary resources to support learning goals (e.g., readings, activities)
- Extra tutorials or teaching support
- One-on-one assistance from trainers/assessors
- Reasonable adjustments to support individual needs
- Technical support for technology-related issues

Associated Documents:

Student Handbook
Orientation Program Guide
External Support Services Register
Individual Support Plan
LLN assessment/Pre-Training Review
Student Code of Conduct

7 Responsibility

The Compliance Manager and Operation Manager will be responsible for the implementation of this process and will ensure all requirements of this policy and procedure are met. Any breach of this policy will be promptly communicated to RI's CEO.

8 Review Date

12 months from the date of this version, or as required.

9 Version History

Version Number	Date	Reason for Change	Prepared by	Approved by
V1.0	July 2023	Policy has been created	Compliance Manager (NK)	CEO (SD)
V1.1	July 2024	Policy has been reviewed for update	Compliance Manager (NK)	CEO (SD)
V2.0	July 2025	Introduced new services for students. Reference to NVR SRTO 2025.	Compliance Manager (NK)	CEO (SD)

