

International Students

Welfare, Support and Accommodation Policy

Policy

Kennedy Baptist College is committed to ensuring the welfare and support of its international students. Where the College has taken on responsibility for the approval of accommodation, support, and welfare arrangements for students under the age of 18, the College will ensure the arrangements are suitable, ongoing, and appropriately managed to the completion of the course.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure compliance with *Standard 5 – Younger Overseas Students* and of *Standard 6 – Student Support Services* of the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (The National Code 2018)*.

Scope

This policy applies to international student visa applicants seeking enrolment at Kennedy Baptist College for the duration of their enrolment. This policy supports *Visa Condition 8532* that requires international student applicants under the age of 18 years must demonstrate that they have suitable accommodation, support, and general welfare arrangements in place (for the length of the student visa or until they turn 18 years) before commencing a course in Australia.

Accommodation, Support and Welfare Arrangements

Kennedy Baptist College requires overseas students to live in safe environments. The College requires overseas students to have accommodation and support for the duration of their enrolment.

If an overseas student is under 18 years, the student's welfare must be maintained for the duration of their stay in Australia as a student visa condition. To maintain welfare, overseas students can either:

- Stay in Australia with a 'nominated guardian' approved by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA), who can be the overseas students' parent, person who has legal custody, or an eligible relative over 21 years and is of good character; or
- Stay in accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements that have been approved by the College. In this case the College will issue a *Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW)* letter.

Where the College takes responsibility for the welfare of overseas students under 18 years, it will ensure that the overseas student's living arrangements are safe and adequately meet their needs. The College will take all practical steps to ensure welfare is

maintained, regardless of the overseas student's study circumstances. The College must also:

- Ensure that any adults (18 years and over) involved in or providing accommodation, support and welfare arrangements to the student all have WWCC. This includes visitors (18 years and over) who will be staying at the premises overnight. The College will continually monitor the WWCC of homestay carers to ensure all cards are current; and
- Assess the suitability of a homestay provider's accommodation prior to the accommodation being approved and inform them of their responsibilities about the placement of students under 18 years. The College will provide feedback of its assessment to the homestay provider / carer; and
- Regularly contact the homestay carer by phone and / or email to discuss and review arrangements; and at least every six (6) months, monitor the ongoing accommodation, support, and welfare arrangements to ensure that the students are placed in suitable care and are protected from harm by conducting site visits and by completing the *Homestay Site Visit Checklist*; and
- Notify the police and any other relevant agencies as soon as practicable if unable to contact an overseas student and there are concerns for the overseas student's welfare; and
- Advise the DHA of any change in accommodation arrangements:
 - As soon as practicable, if the student will be cared for by a parent or approved nominated guardian and a *Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW)* is no longer required; or
 - Within 24 hours, if the College is no longer able to approve the student's accommodation, support, and welfare arrangements.
- Make all efforts to contact a younger overseas student's parent or legal custodian immediately if they can no longer approve the overseas student's welfare; and
- Have a process for managing emergency situations and for when welfare arrangements are disrupted, for students under the age of 18; and
- How to seek assistance and report any incidents involving child abuse.

All reasonable efforts will be made by the College in close communication with parents and / or approved nominated guardians to assist students under the age of 18 with difficulties impacting their welfare arrangements and wellbeing.

In the event of an emergency or disruption to welfare and accommodation arrangements, students must use the emergency contact numbers provided to them at induction and notify the College of their situation.

1. Welfare arrangements approved by the DHA

If an overseas student is under 18 years, a parent, legal custodian, or an eligible relative can be nominated to take responsibility for the overseas student's accommodation, welfare, and support. The parent, legal custodian or eligible relative must have an appropriate visa or have applied for a Student Guardian visa (subclass 590).

An eligible relative is:

- A parent, spouse, de facto partner, brother, sister, step-parent, step-brother, step-sister, grandparent, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew, or step-grandparent, step-aunt, step-uncle, step-niece, or step-nephew; and
- Nominated by a parent of the applicant or a person who has custody of the applicant; and
- Aged at least 21 years; and
- Of good character, and show this by providing a police clearance from the countries in which they have lived for more than 12 months in the past 10 years after the age of 16 years; and
- An Australian citizen, permanent resident or be eligible to remain in Australia until the overseas student's visa expires or the overseas student turns 18 years of age (whichever occurs first).

The DHA will assess the nominated arrangements according to the *Migration Regulations 1994* and, if approved, the parent, legal custodian or eligible relative will be the overseas student's 'nominated guardian'.

If an approved nominated guardian takes responsibility for the accommodation, support and welfare arrangements of the student, the College is not involved and must not issue a CAAW letter.

The College is not obliged to follow up where a nominated guardian has been approved by the DHA. However, the College is required to contact the DHA and other authorities if it becomes aware that the overseas student is not being well cared for.

2. Nominated Guardians and Welfare Arrangements

Should there be any changes to the guardianship or accommodation and welfare arrangements during the enrolment period, the parent / legal custodian and newly nominated guardian(s) must complete the College's *Change of Guardianship and / or Accommodation and Welfare Arrangements* form.

Requirements for Approved Welfare Arrangements

1. Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW) and Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)

The DHA requires students to have accommodation, support, and welfare arrangements in place when they apply for a visa. Where the College accepts responsibility for the welfare arrangements of an overseas student under 18 years, a CAAW letter is created at the same time as the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE). They must be created together as the details in the CoE appear in the CAAW and vice versa.

In creating the CAAW letter, the College are not taking over legal responsibility for the overseas student under 18 years. The parent or legal custodian of the overseas student is always legally responsible for the student.

In the CAAW, the College nominates the start and end dates of the period for which they are accepting responsibility for approving accommodation, support, and welfare

arrangements for the student. These dates must cover the length of the CoE plus seven (7) days at the end, as a minimum. The student's visa start and end dates will correspond with the dates in the CAAW, except if the student turns 18 during their course, when the end date will correspond with the student's 18th birthday.

The student is not permitted to travel to Australia until the commencement date of welfare arrangements nominated by the College on the CAAW. For this reason, students must inform the Registrar (registrar@kennedy.wa.edu.au) of their intended arrival date in Australia.

Students under the age of 18 years cannot remain in Australia unless the student's parent or approved nominated guardian is able to provide confirmation of suitable accommodation, support, and welfare arrangements.

Where a student has a package arrangement of consecutive offers with more than one provider (e.g., ELICOS provider and secondary school provider), each provider must complete the CAAW with nominated start and end dates. Any gap in welfare arrangements will result in the student visa only being granted for the period of continuous care arrangements.

Requirements for Approved Accommodation (Homestay)

1. Homestay

If not living with parents, legal custodians or approved nominated guardians, international students are to live in an approved homestay during their enrolment at the College. It is in the student's best interests that a homestay offers an environment conducive to study, provides sustaining meals, a family environment and is not too far from the College and / or suitable transport facilities.

2. Recommended Homestay Providers

Kennedy Baptist College does not offer student boarding facilities. It is recommended that parents, legal custodians, or nominated guardians who do not have an approved relative or an approved homestay provider, contact the following homestay providers:

- Tann Advisory & Management Services (TAMS): www.tannadvisory.com.au
- Australian Homestay Network (AHN): www.homestaynetwork.org

Parents, legal custodians and nominated guardians should refer to the individual homestay provider websites for current fees.

These providers are responsible for the vetting and homestay selection processes, provision of appropriate documentation and training for providers accommodating international students.

3. Homestay Carer

The College does not accept students under the age of 18 years living in homestay unless they are staying with a homestay carer whom the College deems appropriate. The homestay carer must agree to the College representative visiting the homestay site, on request, to confirm that the facilities are suitable and adequate.

The homestay carer must:

- Be at least 21 years; and
- Be of good character; and
- Have an appropriate visa to remain in Australia until the international student's visa expires or the student turns 18; and
- Hold a Federal Police Clearance (for hosting students of all ages); and
- Hold a current Working with Children Card (WWCC) and ensure that all occupants of the household who are over 18 years must have a current Working with Children Card (WWCC) when hosting students under 18 years.

Recognising the importance of ensuring the safety and welfare of international students, Kennedy Baptist College requires homestay carers to meet the standards as per the [Australian Government Schools International Homestay Standards](#).

4. Fit and Proper Homestay Providers

The homestay provider must:

- Meet homestay standards as per the *Australian Government Schools International Homestay Standards*.
- Report immediately to the College any harm or reasonable suspicion of harm towards a homestay student.
- Participate in monitoring and reviews of the homestay arrangement.
- Not host any more than three (3) international students enrolled with any education provider.
- Notify the College of any unexplained absences, by the homestay student, from the homestay residence.
- Notify the College if the homestay carer is temporarily unable to provide accommodation for, or supervision of, the student.
- Notify the College of a change of address or contact details.

5. Monitoring Homestay Arrangements

The College will monitor and verify that the international student's accommodation is appropriate to their age and needs:

- Prior to the accommodation being approved; and
- At least every six (6) months thereafter.

The College will conduct an initial physical site visit and subsequent visits to verify maintenance of conditions, as well as conducting informal meetings with homestay students to monitor their progress and adjustment.

6. Requests to Change Agreed Accommodation Arrangements

Where the College has approved the student's accommodation, support and welfare arrangements, the student, and student's parent or legal custodian will require the College's approval for any changes to welfare and accommodation arrangements prior to that change. The College will liaise with the student's parent or legal custodian or approved nominated guardian as required and inform the DHA.

Students must obtain approval to change their accommodation, support, and welfare arrangements if they wish to do so after their arrival in Australia.

Where the parent / legal custodian or approved nominated, guardian takes responsibility for the welfare arrangements of the student and has provided written confirmation to that effect, the *PRISMS Approval to Change Accommodation and Welfare Arrangements letter* will be completed.

a. Request Not Approved

Should the College not approve requests for changes to agreed arrangements, and the student refuses to maintain the approved and agreed arrangements, the College will make all reasonable effort to immediately contact the student's parent or legal custodian, notify the DHA and the student that the College is no longer able to approve the student's accommodation and welfare arrangements.

This will be reported to the DHA within 24 hours using the *Non-Approval of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare Arrangements letter* in PRISMS.

This will be considered a breach of the student's visa conditions and the student may have their visa cancelled and be subject to a three-year exclusion period. The DHA will contact the student directly to ensure visa implications are understood.

7. Gaps in Welfare Arrangements

If, after reasonable efforts to find suitable accommodation and welfare arrangements, a student under the age of 18 years is left with a 'gap' period in care arrangements, the College must report this by lodging the *Non-Approval of Accommodation and Welfare Arrangements letter* on PRISMS. A breach of student visa conditions may lead to the cancellation of the student's visa by the DHA.

If a student is unable to make alternative suitable arrangements of which the College could approve, the student would be best advised to voluntarily return to the student's home country for the 'gap' period, to avoid breaching their visa conditions.

8. Term Breaks

Students are expected to return home to parents during term breaks. In cases where students continue to live in homestay or attend a camp or similar activity, the College Registrar is to be notified and arrangements must be approved by the College.

9. Overnight Stay away from Homestay

Students under the age of 18 years who wish to stay overnight at an address other than their approved homestay address, must submit to the College Registrar at least 10

working days prior, a request in writing which has been signed by their homestay carer and parent / legal custodian or approved nominated guardian approving such accommodation.

This request must be approved by the Principal prior to the date of the non-homestay overnight accommodation request.

10. Cancellation or Suspension of Student Enrolment

Where a student's enrolment has been cancelled, or suspended, the College will continue to check the suitability of care arrangements for that student until one of the following occurs:

- The international student has alternative welfare arrangements approved by another registered provider; or
- The international student has a nominated guardian approved by the DHA; or
- The international student leaves Australia; or
- The College has notified the DHA that it is no longer able to approve the student's welfare arrangements; or
- The College has taken the required action after not being able to locate or contact the student.

11. Termination of Homestay Arrangements

a. Termination by the Homestay Provider

The homestay provider may withdraw as a homestay carer by providing at least four (4) weeks written notice to the College prior to the termination date.

b. Termination by the College

The College may revoke the homestay arrangement by providing the homestay provider with notice to that effect and removing the student from the homestay residence in cases of allegations of child abuse and serious harm.

12. Terminating College Responsibility for Welfare Arrangements

The College's responsibility for welfare arrangements will be terminated if alternative welfare arrangements have been put in place. In this circumstance, the College will confirm that the new welfare arrangements are formally in place before terminating the CAAW.

The College may terminate a CAAW where the College can no longer take responsibility for the student due to events, such as:

- The student refusing or leaving their College approved homestay arrangements or accommodation without notice, even after the College has assisted the student to maintain appropriate arrangements.
- The homestay provider becoming unable to maintain arrangements.

- The student's enrolment being suspended or cancelled by the College; or
- The student going missing from their accommodation and cannot be found or contacted, even after the College has implemented its *Critical and Emergency Incidents Policy*.

In the above situations, the College must report the international student within 24 hours using the *Non-Approval of Appropriate Accommodation / Welfare Arrangements* letter through PRISMS.

The College must make all reasonable efforts to ensure the international student's parents / legal custodians are notified immediately if it can no longer take responsibility for the student's welfare.

Welfare and Support

1. Support Services for International Students

International students will receive support from the College during their enrolment. The College is responsible for providing access to support for its international students to ensure their mental and physical wellbeing. The College will:

- Provide information and access to the induction program.
- Offer reasonable support.
- Have a Critical and Emergency Incidents Policy in place.
- Ensure there are sufficient staff to support and advise international students who require assistance.

The induction program has been designed to familiarise the international student and their family with the College's expectations, rules, and facilities, and introduce the student to the social and cultural norms that they may need to be aware of in Australia.

International students will receive a (digital and / or hard) copy of the *International Student Handbook*. This handbook is a valuable resource and provides information on:

- The College's facilities and resources.
- Requirements for course attendance and progress.
- Support services at the College that are available to assist international students with general or personal circumstances that may adversely affect their education in Australia.
- Support services available to assist students with the adjustment to study and life in Australia.
- English language and study assistance programs.
- Relevant legal services.
- The complaints and appeals processes.

Version control					
Version	Amendments	Date Reviewed	Endorsed by Board	Next Review	Author of version
1		09/09/2019			
2		24/11/2021	24/11/2021	08/2023	
3	Updated	09/06/2022		08/2023	C Acciano
4	Merged Accommodation and Welfare Arrangements Policy and Students Under 18 Welfare and Support Policy	27/11/2023	15/05/2024	08/2025	C Acciano