



# New Student Orientation Policy

Governing Council Approved Policy

## Table of Contents

Version Control.....	2
1. Preamble.....	3
2. Scope.....	3
3. Policy Principle.....	3
4. Objectives of Orientation Program.....	3
5. Student Orientation.....	5
6. Late and Non-arrivals.....	5
7. Orientation.....	5
Appendix A: Orientation Guidelines	
1. Aim of Orientation.....	6
2. Student Experience.....	6
3. Learning Transitions.....	6
4. Roles and Responsibilities.....	6
5. Operational guidelines.....	7

## Version Control

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<b>Related Documents</b>	Admissions Policy and Procedure Advanced Standing Policy and Procedure Course Progression and Graduation Policy Dictionary of Terms
<b>Related Legislations</b>	Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2001 Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS) Higher Education Standards Frameworks (Threshold Standard) 2021 (Cth) Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth) National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011
<b>Higher Education Standards Frameworks (Threshold Standard) 2021 (Cth)</b>	BI.1 "Higher Education Provider" Category Standard 1.3 Standard 7.2
<b>Benchmarking Institutes</b>	Australian Institute of Higher Education Macquarie University Southern Cross University The University of Newcastle Western Sydney University

## **1. Preamble**

### *1.1 Purpose*

New Student Orientation Policy ('the Policy') is designed to outline the requirements regarding orientation for all new students including the late and non-arrival students at the Churchill Institute of Higher Education ('the Institute').

### *1.2 Definitions*

For definitions, refer to *Dictionary of Terms*.

## **2. Scope**

This Policy covers all prospective and current students at the Institute.

## **3. Policy Principle**

The Institute:

- 3.1 aims to facilitate a positive and successful transition for all commencing students to their course of study through orientation processes which provide academic, social, administrative and geographic familiarisation with the Institute;
- 3.2 is committed to providing compulsory orientation to help transition into courses of study, with consideration of international students arriving to study at the Institute; and
- 3.3 commits to providing successful transition into the course of study, irrespective of student educational backgrounds, entry pathway, mode or place of study.

## **4. Objectives of Orientation Program**

The main objectives of the Institute's orientation program include provision of information to assist students make their transition successfully to support academic achievement.,

### *4.1 The Institute orientation will encourage and support academic achievement by:*

- a. Explaining and clarifying academic culture and the expectations of academic study;
- b. Promoting a clear understanding of the aims, objectives, learning and teaching approaches and assessment requirements for each degree and how each unit links to the overall course;
- c. Identifying academic skills necessary for success and providing support to develop these skills.
- d. Encouraging the development of independent study habits and learner responsibility;
- e. Providing opportunities for students to meet academic staff in both formal and informal settings (like emails);
- f. Providing opportunities and mechanisms for students to connect with peers in their cohort to better support their learning;
- g. Highlighting the importance of student engagement with their learning experience and designing experiences to actively support and promote such engagement;

### *4.2 The Institute orientation will support student development by:*

- a. Ensuring students understand their rights and responsibilities as a student (as per the *Student Code of Conduct*), and avenues for student representation.
- b. Providing appropriate opportunities for participation in social activities.

- c. Modelling behaviour that encourages and promotes social and environmental responsibility and acknowledges cultural diversity.
- d. Promoting the importance of engaging with the Institute and broader communities.
- e. Providing an environment that promotes well-being, safety and inclusion.
- f. Providing opportunities for peer support and mentoring.

4.3 *The Institute orientation will support student attainment and retention by:*

- a. Avoiding 'information overload' by ensuring information provision is limited to what is immediately relevant and/or necessary and is conveyed in a way that is supportive and welcoming of students during their orientation program.
- b. Addressing any concerns or anxiety about course/career choice as early as possible.
- c. Ensuring students are aware of the broad range of support services available to them at appropriate stages of the transition period and how to access them.
- d. Promoting involvement in Institute life including engagement with peers and staff particularly within the same course.
- e. Supporting social transition by providing appropriate activities
- f. Facilitating interactions with appropriate contact points within the administrative environment.
- g. Following up students who show signs of disengagement with support and referral to appropriate services.
- h. Recognising the diversity of student skills and needs according to their different stages of life and/or study.

4.4 *The Institute orientation will support international students in adjusting to study and life in Australia by providing adequate information about:*

- a. support services available to assist overseas students to help them adjust to study and life in Australia both internal and external to the Institute
- b. English language and study assistance programs
- c. relevant legal services
- d. emergency and health services
- e. the Institute's facilities and resources
- f. complaints and appeals processes both internal and external to the Institute
- g. requirements for course attendance and progress
- h. support services available to assist students with general or personal circumstances that are adversely affecting their education in Australia
- i. information on their employment rights and conditions, and how to resolve workplace issues.

4.5 *The Institute orientation principles are:*

- a. *The Institute values its students* – all our dealings with new students will demonstrate that they are welcome and valued by the entire Institute.

- b. *An ongoing process* – we recognize that every educational transition involves a period of adjustment and orientation is an important part of that transition. The Institute treats orientation as a process, rather than a one off ‘event’. Targeted orientation occurs between the letter of offer and the end of the first session of study.
- c. *Shared responsibility* – the orientation of new students to the Institute is a shared responsibility of all staff and should be a priority for all areas. Student transition will be explicitly supported through the intentional design of the first-year curriculum as well as the timely and easy access to support services that aid academic, social and administrative orientation.
- d. *Mutual understanding of responsibility* – our interactions and provision of advice and resources to new students will highlight the mutual responsibilities of both the Institute and its students, as well as the importance of self-efficacy and responsibility, assisting students to become independent learners.
- e. *Meaningful and appropriate experiences* – our orientation activities and resources will be relevant to students’ future goals and will be evidence based. Orientation activities and processes will be continually monitored and enhanced by regular evaluation and student input into the development process.
- f. *An integrated approach* – the Institute will take an approach that ensures communication, activities and resources are delivered in a coherent, integrated and consistent manner.
- g. *Effective delivery of information* – the orientation information provided to students and their families will be accurate, relevant and accessible, creating realistic expectations. Direct communication to students will be timely and relevant and relate to issues of immediate importance within the orientation period.
- h. *Student engagement* – the orientation program will assist all students to become part of the Institute and encourage cohort engagement by providing opportunities for social and informal interaction between students, their peers and staff to better support their learning.
- i. *Student diversity* – the Institute’s orientation program will recognise and value the diversity of cohorts and unique needs, and study modes of all students. Orientation will be inclusive of all students, regardless of course, study mode, accommodation arrangements or educational/ personal/ cultural background and will include specific tailored activities where appropriate.

## **5. Student Orientation**

### *5.1 Requirements (domestic and international students)*

- a. New Student Orientation Sessions are compulsory for all new students to attend regardless of their course of study. That is to ensure that students are provided with valuable information prior to formal start of their study at the Institute.
- b. New Student Orientation Sessions occur prior to the start of formal teaching.
- c. Students who arrive after the second day of New Student Orientation Program will be expected to attend a Late Orientation Session.
- d. International students must organise their travel to ensure they are arriving in the country in time to attend the New Student Orientation Sessions.

## **6. Late and Non-arrivals**

### *6.1 Late arrivals (all students)*

- a. Late Arrival Approval may be granted to students if they are able to prove compassionate and compelling circumstances exist.
- b. Students arriving after the commencement of the semester must advise an expected date of arrival in their application.

### 6.2 *Non-arrivals (international students)*

- a. Students who are not contactable or who do not arrive to commence a course of study will have their enrolment status amended and Department of Home Affairs (DoHA) will be notified of the non-commencement of studies.
- b. Students who wish to defer their course of study to the next available semester, will be issued with an amended Letter of Offer and Confirmation of Enrolment/s (CoE).

### 6.3 *Non-arrivals (domestic students)*

- a. Non-arriving students will have their enrolments cancelled.

## **7. Orientation**

- 7.1 The Institute will deliver a comprehensive, integrated and coordinated approach to student orientation and transition that assists students to adjust to life and study in this environment.
- 7.2 Students will be made aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to their courses.
- 7.3 The New Student orientation Policy and procedures will be reviewed every two years.

## **Appendix A: Orientation Guidelines**

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### **1. Aim of Orientation**

The Churchill Institute of Higher Education's ('the Institute') orientation program will facilitate a smooth and successful transition into a degree for commencing students. Orientation activities and resources will be available in a timely manner and will be accessible, relevant and accurate regardless of students' educational background, geographical location or study mode. The Institution's orientation program will inspire students to fully engage with their learning experience and will address the mutual expectations and needs of students and the Institute for students to become successful and independent learners.

### **2. Student Experience**

The Institute is committed to creating a unified, integrated, student-centred experience by improving the quality of our students' engagement with the Institute regardless of who they are, where they are, or what stage they are in their relationship with the Institute. An orientation process that supports a successful transition into a degree is central to a quality student experience.

### **3. Learning Transitions**

All students regardless of their age, educational background, location or study mode experience a period of transition or adjustment when commencing study. Transition is commonly associated with school leavers commencing at the Institute whether domestic or international students.

Orientation programs and activities have an important role to play in ensuring these transitions are as smooth as possible. The Institute recognises that the transition process is one which is mediated over time, and planning and delivery of orientation activities and strategies reflects this. The 'official' orientation period extends from the time of the 'letter of offer' through until the end of the first session of study and includes strategies embedded within and outside the course.

### **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **4.1 Overarching Governance**

The Executive Management Team is responsible for the general oversight of orientation at the Institute. For terms of reference, refer to the Institute's *Governance Charter* for further details.

#### **4.2 Student Association**

The Student Association is responsible for the organisation of social activities for students during the orientation period. It is expected that opportunities for social interaction will also be organised through course specialisation-based events.

#### **4.3 Course and Unit Coordinators**

The Course and Unit Coordinators are responsible for ensuring that the transition needs of students in their course are met through the orientation process and for providing necessary information. At a minimum, course-based orientation should:

- a. Provide an overview of the course.
- b. Outline academic expectations for course/unit(s) in terms of time commitments, assessments, attendance.
- c. Provide opportunity for students to clarify their expectations and ask questions.
- d. Emphasise the availability of support services.

- e. Provide opportunities for the development of student-student and student-staff relationships.

Course and Unit Coordinators are also responsible for ensuring that the first-year curriculum actively supports student progression.

4.4 The *Academic Manager* is responsible for the overall coordination of orientation activities including timetabling of activities, liaising between key stakeholders, dissemination of orientation guidelines and the ongoing evaluation and reporting of orientation activities across the Institute ensuring equivalence of service, information and quality regardless of location.

4.5 The *Dean*, along with the *Academic Manager* is responsible for the general oversight of on campus orientation activities and the organisation of a commencement ceremony in Semester I each year. This ceremony should be a welcome to the Institute to new students and their families and should be a positive and motivating occasion that inspires students to strive for success and instils confidence in families that the Institute has been the right choice.

4.6 The reception is the single point of contact for student queries during the orientation process. The Academic staff must provide the admin team with copies of all information; timetables and resources provided to students and should be made aware of any special information requirements or advice to be provided to students.

## **5. Operational guidelines**

### **5.1 Key Dates and Activities**

The week immediately preceding Week 1 of the semester is known as 'O-week' and is the period where activities on campus and online concentrate on the following issues:

- a. Ensuring enrolment is accurate and complete;
- b. Making on campus and online tours available;
- c. Providing activities to facilitate peer to peer /peer to staff engagement within the course;
- d. Academic expectations are outlined; and
- e. Students are made aware of support services available at the Institute.

'O Week' activities for international students shall be aligned with relevant dates suitable for their arrival. While activities will be focused on specific dates aligning to the academic calendar, the Institute is mindful that students may enrol before or after the official starting point of session. For this reason, transition-based resources will be available on an ongoing basis.

### **5.2 O-Week**

- a. O-Week will begin with a commencement ceremony and should be addressed by the most senior member of academic staff available including the Chairs of the respective Governing Bodies.
- b. Organisers should consult with the Marketing Team to ensure appropriate use of the Institute's branding banners and other relevant materials and promotion.

Where possible face to face delivered orientation sessions/lectures should be recorded/saved to the orientation site to be available for those who couldn't attend and to develop a repository of sustainable resources.