



Overseas Student Student Welfare Policy

1. Introduction

This Policy seeks to ensure that overseas students enrolled at Ruyton Girls' School (Ruyton) are provided with support to enable them to adjust to study and life in Australian.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all staff and overseas students enrolled at Ruyton.

3. Key elements of the policy

3.1. Overseas Student Coordinators

The Overseas Student Coordinator is the official point of contact for all overseas students. Support is also provided by the Overseas Student Wellbeing Coordinator. Together, these two roles manage overseas students accommodation, support and general welfare.

Students are provided with an Overseas Student Handbook that contains full details of the School's support services, including who to contact in emergency situations. A Student Safety Card is also provided to students in homestay accommodation.

3.2. Local Support Persons

Where a student is not residing with a parent on a guardianship visa or a relative approved by the Department of Home Affairs, they are required to have a Local Support Person in Australia for the duration of their enrolment at Ruyton regardless of their age. The Local Support Person provides support in addition to that provided by the School. The Local Support Person is not a legal guardian of the student.

The Local Support Person is an independent person whom the student can rely upon for guidance, advice and support during their time as a student. They act as an independent third party to advocate in the best interests of the student. They work with the School to provide support through regular and sustained person visits and telephone contact.

All Local Support Persons must be arranged through Ruyton's preferred provider:

[ISA Guardian & Welfare Services](#)

Parents/legal guardians are responsible for arranging support services for their daughter. All costs associated with arranging an approved Local Support Person are the responsibility of the students' parents/legal guardians. Local Support Person arrangements must be in place before a student commences at Ruyton.

All nominated Local Support Persons are required to be interviewed and assessed for suitability by the School's Overseas Student Coordinator. Local Support Persons are fully informed of their responsibilities and the

School's approach to child protection and safety. Each Local Support Person must hold a valid Working with Children Check and receive annual training in child protection.

3.3. Other Student Support

Support services offered by the School to assist overseas students to achieve their expected learning outcomes are outlined below:

3.3.1. Academic

Throughout their enrolment, teachers and specialized staff members are available to assist students with enquiries or to overcome difficulties they may be experiencing. Classroom teachers will assist students with questions relating to their study in a particular subject. Wellbeing Leaders are available to support and oversee student welfare and academic commitment.

Wellbeing Leaders will liaise with the Overseas Student Coordinator in regard to attendance issues.

3.3.2. Student Health and Counselling

The student Health Centre is staffed by qualified nurses who are able to assist students with minor illnesses. Local Support Persons can assist students to make medical and dental appointments outside of School.

The Student Counsellor will consult with students who are experiencing difficulties of a personal nature or difficulties with academic progress or management.

The Overseas Student Coordinator and the Overseas Student Wellbeing Coordinator also provides ongoing personal support and advocacy for overseas students.

3.3.3. Careers

The Careers & Course Counsellors assist students with subject choice and application for VTAC courses.

3.3.4. Financial and Legal Matters

Any matters concerning fees and accounts should be directed to the Director Business, Finance and Facilities.

Should a student require or request legal assistance the School will refer the student to Victorian Legal Aid, Department of Justice. The legal costs will be borne by the student.

3.3.5. Translation and Interpreting Services

The School will arrange for translation and interpreting for students at either staff or student request. There are a number of staff at Ruyton who speak the language of our overseas students and can assist students and families when necessary.

The School will arrange for an interpreter from the Victorian Interpreting and Translating Service, at the School's expense, to assist with matters of a more serious or personal matter that require an independent person. Local Support Persons may also assist with interpreting.

3.4. Child Safety Standards

Ruyton has a zero tolerance policy for child abuse and is committed to promoting child safety, children's wellbeing and protecting children from abuse. The School has implemented the Victorian Child Safe Standards to accommodate and take the needs of all children into account when creating a child safe environment. This includes children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The School has adopted a proactive risk management based approach to the protection of overseas students from child abuse and has developed strategies to identify and mitigate the particular risks and vulnerabilities of overseas students.

All adults involved in the welfare, supervision and accommodation of our overseas students must comply with the School's child safety policies and procedures (available on our [Website](#)) and uphold the principles and

values set out in these documents. It is expected that all reasonable steps will be taken to ensure the safety of our overseas students.

Where there are concerns that an overseas student may be experiencing abuse, these concerns should be immediately raised with one of the Schools' Child Safety Leaders at the School on ph: 9819 2422. If the student is in immediate danger the Police should be contacted on 000.

The School must notify the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) if an alleged child protection incident, suspicion or disclosure relates to an overseas student and the School has issued a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW) letter in relation to that student thereby assuming responsibility for the student's accommodation, support and general welfare.

3.5. Staff Training

All staff who interact directly with overseas students are made aware of the School's obligations under the ESOS framework and the potential implications for overseas students arising from the exercise of these obligations.

The School's Overseas Student Coordinators and support staff involved in the care and management of overseas students receive regular training in:

- Ruyton's Child Protection Program, including the Child Safe Standards;
- the School's approach to managing critical incidents and emergency situations;
- the procedures for verifying that the student's homestay accommodation is appropriate to the students age and needs;
- the ESOS Act, the National Code of Practice 2018 and the VRQA Guidelines for the Enrolment of Overseas Students Aged Under 18 Years.

3.6. Critical Incident Management

Ruyton will take all reasonable steps to ensure that overseas student welfare is managed in the event of a critical incident occurring during or outside school hours. The *Overseas Student – Critical Incident Policy* details the School's response to critical incidents impacting overseas students.

3.7. Student Safety

Students will be advised on orientation of the actions that they can take to ensure their personal safety and security. Age and culturally appropriate information is provided on how they can seek assistance for and report an incident that significantly impacts on their wellbeing, including incidents or allegations involving actual or alleged sexual, physical or other abuse. This includes information on safety whilst online.

Students will also be provided with general information on safety and awareness relevant to Australian life both at their orientation briefing and electronically.

4. References

- The Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act (Commonwealth)
- National Code of Practice 2018
- VRQA Guidelines for Enrolment of Overseas Students Aged Under 18 Years

5. Related Policies

- Overseas Student – Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Overseas Student – Course Progress and Attendance Policy
- Overseas Student – Critical Incident Policy

- Ruyton Child Protection and Safety Policy
- Ruyton Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Ruyton Crisis Management Plan
- Ruyton Emergency Response Procedures

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