



International Student Handbook

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BRISBANE CAREER COLLEGE PTY LTD
TRADING AS
SERO INSTITUTE



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Welcome to SERO Institute

Dear Student

We are delighted that you have decided to enrol at SERO Institute. We hope you have a most rewarding time studying and living in Australia. We understand that this is a very big step for you and we congratulate you on your decision. We are here to help you, so please feel free to ask us as many questions as you like before and after your enrolment.

On the first day at SERO Institute, you will be introduced to all the key staff. If you are confused or don't understand something, remember to ask the friendly SERO Institute staff for assistance.

This handbook is also available on our website to access or download. Please read all the information carefully. It will help you to familiarise yourself with SERO Institute staff and rules, and other useful tips about life in Australia. Please keep this handbook with you throughout your stay in Australia and use it as often as needed.

We hope you make a lot of new friends, have fun and most importantly engage actively in your training program at SERO Institute, so you can be successful in your career.

While you are studying with us, we would appreciate any feedback on your experience at SERO Institute as we hope to use this to continuously improve the quality of our training and support for students.

We look forward to welcoming you to SERO Institute soon!

With best wishes,

Adam Chandel

Principal Executive Officer

SERO Institute

SECTION I: Before you arrive

1. ABOUT AUSTRALIA

Students who want to study in an English-speaking country have several choices, including Australia, New Zealand, the UK, USA and Canada. However, many students choose Australia because of our quality education system which is recognised worldwide, our low cost of living and high living standards, and our close proximity to Asia. Our educational system is regulated by the government to ensure that all institutions consistently maintain quality standards. Also, institutions that enrol international students must comply with additional requirements, to ensure that the students are accurately informed about their course of study, and that their financial investment is protected.

Australia consists of six states, two major mainland territories, and other minor territories. The states are New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia. The two major mainland territories are the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory.

Please refer to the following websites to get general information about living in Australia.

- **Living costs in Australia:** <http://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/global/live-in-australia/living-costs>
- **Health and safety in Australia:** <http://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/global/live-in-australia/health-and-safety>
- **Working in Australia as an international student:**
<http://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/global/live-in-australia/working>
- **Transport information:** <http://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/global/live-in-australia/transport>

2. AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE AND LIFESTYLE

Australians are generally friendly, easy-going people who work hard during the week and enjoy a relaxed laid-back lifestyle during the weekend. Australian people enjoy outdoor activities, such as sport, beach activities, backyard barbecues and family picnics. Young people like spending time with their friends – going to sporting events, music festivals, concerts, live performances, night clubs and restaurants are quite common forms of socialising.

3. ABOUT THE SERO INSTITUTE ENROLMENT PROCESS

You can apply to SERO Institute directly or through one of our registered agents. Details of registered agents can be accessed at www.SEROinstitute.com.au

To apply for a course place at SERO Institute, you need to follow the following steps:

Step 1:

Student application

All international students need to apply to SERO Institute using the prescribed 'Enrolment Form', which needs to be submitted **complete and signed**. Students should attach the following documents:

- Copy of any international English test results (e.g. IELTS / TOEFL / PTE); OR
- proof that the student has successfully completed an English Language course with an Australian educational institution exiting at an Upper Intermediate level; OR
- statement from educational institution or similar evidence that confirms that English was the language of instruction, if at least five years' studies completed in Australia, UK, USA, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa or Republic of Ireland; OR
- confirmation that the student has successfully completed in Australia in the English language either the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education or studies at the Certificate IV or higher level, in the two years before applying to SERO Institute
- Year 10 certificate or equivalent (entry to Certificate I- IV); OR
- Year 12 certificate or equivalent, or above (entry to all Diploma and Advanced Diploma)
- Certified Copy of passport (or original sighted by SERO Institute)
- Statement of Purpose Letter

Eligibility and minimum entry criteria

All applications from international students will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. **Genuine Temporary Entrant (GTE) requirements** as set by the Department of Home Affairs to establish genuine intent to enter Australia temporarily
2. **Age:** Must be over 16. SERO Institute does not accept students under 16 years of age.
3. **English language requirements**
 - Entry into Cert I-III level: IELTS 4.5 or equivalent English proficiency, Entry into Cert IV level: IELTS 5.5 or equivalent, Entry into Diploma and Advanced Diploma level: IELTS 5.5 or equivalent English proficiency; OR
 - Entry into any level if the student has successfully completed an English Language course with an Australian educational institution exiting at an Upper Intermediate level; OR
 - Entry into any level if the student has undertaken at least 5 years' prior study in an educational institution from selected countries where English was the medium of instruction (see above); OR
 - Entry into any level if the student has successfully completed in Australia in the English language either the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education or studies at the Certificate IV or higher level, in the two years before applying to SERO Institute.
4. **Academic requirements**
 - Entry to Certificate I-IV: Year 10 or equivalent
 - Entry to Diploma and Advanced Diploma: Year 12 or equivalent

Step 2:

SERO Institute staff assess the Students Application

All applications from international students will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. SERO Institute staff will check whether the following supporting documents have been provided:
 - Completed Enrolment Form **signed** by the student
 - Copy of any international English test results (e.g. IELTS / TOEFL / PTE); OR
 - Proof that the student has successfully completed an English Language course with an Australian educational institution exiting at an Upper Intermediate level; OR
 - Statement from educational institution or similar evidence that confirms that English was the language of instruction, if at least five years' studies completed in Australia, UK, USA, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa or Republic of Ireland; OR
 - Official confirmation that the student has successfully completed in Australia in the English language either the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education or studies at the Certificate IV or higher level, in the two years before applying for the student visa.
 - Certified copy of passport (or original sighted by SERO Institute)
 - Statement of Purpose Letter
2. If all the documents have been provided, the student's completed Enrolment Form is assessed by SERO Institute staff who make a judgment about whether:
 - Based on the Statement of Purpose Letter, the prospective Student meets the GTE requirements
 - The prospective Student meets the course eligibility requirements, as per the criteria stated above;
 - The training program is appropriate for the applicant's needs, taking into account their existing skills and competencies

Step 3:

SERO Institute staff issue a Letter of Offer to successful applicants OR a letter to unsuccessful applicants

SERO Institute staff will issue a 'Letter of Offer' to successful applicants.

The Offer will include the following information:

-
- Detail of the Enrollment
- Payment plan
- Payment details
- Orientation details
- SERO team and condition of acceptance of offer
- Administrative fees
- Refund and cancellation policy
- Privacy policy

Step 4:

Student must sign acceptance of Letter of Offer; and pay course fees

The student must accept the offer by signing the 'Letter of Offer' prior to or at the same time as making the required payment for the course. The signed Letter of Offer and proof of payment, must reach SERO Institute before the relevant due date

Step 5:

SERO Institute to issue an electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCOE) through PRISMS

1. After the student has signed the acceptance and paid the required fees by the due date, SERO Institute will issue an electronic 'Confirmation of Enrolment' (eCOE) through the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS)
2. SERO Institute will email a copy of the eCOE to the student and/or his/her nominated agent and instruct the student/agent to advise SERO Institute once the student visa application has been granted

[Note: The eCOE is a key document required to lodge a student visa application]

Step 6:

Student to use eCOE to lodge student visa application

1. The student or his nominated agent can apply for a student visa after obtaining the eCOE
2. The student/agent should notify SERO Institute once their student visa has been granted
3. The student should make travel arrangements in order to arrive in Australia a few days before the course start date

If the student wants help with airport reception or homestay accommodation, they should select the relevant service when completing the original 'Enrolment Form'.

Upon sending the Letter of Offer, SERO Institute will provide the relevant application forms. Complete applications are to be returned to SERO Institute at least 3 weeks prior to a student's scheduled arrival.

The student will receive an email confirmation from the service provider regarding payment requirements and confirmation of arrangements, once finalised.

4. UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENT VISA CONDITIONS

The following information relates to the mandatory conditions of your student visa. It is important that you are aware of, and abide by, your visa conditions at all times. Different visa conditions may apply to you and any family members included on your student visa.

You cannot work more than 40 hours per fortnight during study periods and you cannot commence paid work until you have started your course. You are able to work unlimited hours during any course breaks or holidays.

You must maintain enrolment in a Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) registered course and maintain satisfactory progress and/or attendance.

You must continue to satisfy the requirements of your student visa, including continuing to have sufficient financial capacity to support your study and stay in Australia.

You must maintain adequate health arrangements, Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for the duration of your stay in Australia.

You must maintain adequate schooling arrangements for your school-aged dependents who join you in Australia for longer than 3 months, as part of your student visa.

You must tell your education provider:

- the address where you live in Australia, within seven days of arriving in Australia
- If you change the address where you live, within seven days of the change
- If you change education provider within seven days of receiving the electronic confirmation of enrolment (eCoE) or evidence of enrolment.

For further information on your visa and relevant conditions, refer to your visa grant notification, visit the Department of Home Affairs website at <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/stud> or Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) at [https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/busi/visas-and-migration/visa-entitlement-verification-online-\(vevo\)](https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/busi/visas-and-migration/visa-entitlement-verification-online-(vevo))

5. BRINGING YOUR FAMILY TO AUSTRALIA

You can bring your family to Australia on a student visa. Please visit the Department of Home Affairs website at <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/stud> for further information regarding eligibility criteria and the application process.

6. WORKING IN AUSTRALIA

If you choose to work in Australia, you have the same rights and obligations in the workplace as any other employee. You can find out more about your rights before you apply for a job from the Fair Work Ombudsman at <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/>

You will need to obtain a Tax File Number (TFN) to work in Australia. Please visit the Australia Tax Office website at <https://www.ato.gov.au/> for information about their requirements and the application processes.

While your student visa allows you to work 40 hours per fortnight, please understand that it is not necessarily easy to find work in Australia. You cannot depend on your income in Australia to pay for your fees or living expenses. Your ability to find work depends on your English proficiency, qualifications, previous work experience, skills, a positive and friendly attitude.

Several international students work on a casual basis in the following types of jobs:

- taxi drivers
- wait-staff at restaurants
- check-out counters at retail shops
- farm work
- general office administration
- cleaners

Some international students may find work in their own professional area of expertise or experience; however, it may take time to find your preferred job

7. ACCOMMODATION

Most international students over the age of 18 live independently in shared or private rental accommodation. Some international students opt to live in homestay accommodation, while others may have the option to live with friends and family. The information below will help you to decide about your choice of accommodation.

Transportation to and from SERO Institute

Depending on where they live, students either:

- Walk; or
- Ride bicycles; or
- Catch trains or buses.

Sometimes students must use two buses or a bus and train if they live a long way from their College. You will need to cover the cost (if any) of your transportation to and from College each day.

Additional spending money

As well as the money you will need to pay for your homestay, you will also need extra money to pay for other living expenses. Refer to the section on costs above.

Rental accommodation

Due to SERO Institute's locations being near train and bus stations, accommodation is easy to find, either through local real estate agents and newspapers or www.realestate.com.au, www.gumtree.com.au or www.flatmates.com.au. You can find share accommodation, or rent a unit or house with friends. Searching for the right place could take a couple of weeks, so it's recommended that you book temporary accommodation before arriving (refer to appendix C)

Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA)

The Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA) looks after the laws for renting a place to live in Queensland [the Residential Tenancies Act 1994 and the Residential Services (Accommodation) Act 2002]. The law gives tenants, landlords and agents an understanding of their rights and responsibilities when renting. The RTA can help you learn more about your rights and responsibilities as a tenant. Please note that Residential Tenancy Authority services do not apply to students living in Homestay. For more information visit <https://www.rta.qld.gov.au/>.

Get advice on:

- what to do when you're starting a tenancy
- your rights and legal responsibilities as a tenant
- how to get your bond back
- what to do if you have a problem when renting

8. MEDICAL SERVICES

As an international student on a student visa, you are required to have Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for the duration of your studies. This is a requirement of your student visa and is compulsory.

All international students would have paid for private Health Insurance, from an Australian company, prior to their arrival in Australia. If you arranged your own OSHC, you will need to visit your OSHC provider's office with your passport to obtain your membership card. If SERO Institute arranged OSHC on your behalf, your membership card will be provided at Orientation.

OSHC provides cover when you need to visit a doctor or go to Hospital. The level of cover will depend on your individual policy entitlements and rates charged by the medical practitioner/service provider. You may possibly be required to pay at the time of consultation approximately \$70 – \$80. Pay, and obtain a receipt from the doctor's receptionist to make a claim from your OSHC provider. Waiting periods may apply for pre-existing conditions and pregnancy related services. Further details can be obtained from your OSHC provider. OSHC provides benefits for prescription medicines. You are required to pay a contribution towards the cost of each prescription item.

How to find a local doctor?

Doctors located close by to the campuses:

Brisbane

- Queen Street Medical Centre, 141 Queen Street (07) 3229 9355
- Realcare Medical Centre, The Village Upper Mt Gravatt, 1932 Logan Road (07) 3343 1388

Gold Coast

- Sundale Medical, 8/2 Como Crescent, Southport (07 5631 5959

Perth

- Maylands Medical Centre, Suite 1/50 – 54 Eighth Avenue, Maylands (08) 9473 5888

If you would prefer to go to a different medical centre you can refer to this website:

<http://australiandoctorsdirectory.com.au/>

Also, check with your OSHC provider, who may have special arrangements in place with certain doctors. If you are sick you should see a doctor immediately.

What are you covered for? OSHC may help you pay for:

- Medical practitioners (including specialists) who treat you at the doctor's surgery, Hospital or at home.
- Pathology services such as blood tests
- X-rays
- Hospitals – Public or Private
- Emergency ambulance transport (medically necessary). OSHC pays 100% of the charge for medically necessary ambulance transport when medical attention is required immediately.

What to do in case of an emergency

For any emergency where Police, Fire Brigade or Ambulance assistance is required immediately call '000'.

Our Business Development Manager is available at all times on **0478 046 483** for **emergencies**. Please use this number after hours **strictly for EMERGENCIES ONLY**. If your enquiry relates to an administrative matter, please contact SERO Institute Reception during office hours.

How 000 works

000 calls are answered by an operator who will ask which service you require - Police, Fire or Ambulance. The operator will ask relevant questions, and arrange an appropriate response from the local Police, Ambulance or Fire Service. 000 Calls are free on all mobile phones.

Useful emergency websites:

Queensland

- Police Service - <http://www.police.qld.gov.au/>
- Ambulance Service - <http://www.ambulance.qld.gov.au/>
- Fire & Emergency Services - <https://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/>

Western Australia

- Police Service - <https://www.police.wa.gov.au/>
- Ambulance Service - <https://www.stjohnambulance.com.au>
- Fire & Emergency Services - <https://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/pages/default.aspx/>

9. LEGAL SERVICES IN AUSTRALIA

Students are advised to carefully select legal advisors, particularly in relation to migration advice.

Migration agents

In Australia, migration agents must be registered with the Office of the Migration Agents Registration Authority (Office of the MARA) to provide immigration assistance services.

A registered migration agent can advise on visa requirements, help an applicant lodge a visa application and deal with the Department of Home Affairs on an applicant's behalf, usually for a fee.

If an applicant chooses to seek migration advice, e.g. because they do not feel confident lodging an application, or if their case is complex, it is important that a registered migration agent is used.

Note: An applicant does not have to use a migration agent to lodge a visa application with the DHA, and a migration agent cannot influence the outcome of the application. **To find a registered migration agent, click on the following link:** <https://www.mara.gov.au/search-the-register-of-migration-agents/>

Lawyers/ Solicitors

If you haven't used a lawyer/ solicitor before, you may not know where to find one, what to expect when using one, or what to do if things don't work out as you expected.

You can use the Queensland Law Society website to find a registered lawyer:

<http://www.qls.com.au/content/lwp/wcm/connect/QLS/You+%26+Your+Solicitor/Find+a+Solicitor>

10. DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS

If you need to contact the Department of Home Affairs, the contact details are as follows: National telephone numbers:

- General enquiries: 131 881
- Translating and Interpreting Service: 131 450

SECTION III: SERO Institute as a VET Registered Training Organisation

SERO Institute Commitment

SERO Institute is committed to ensuring that we:

- Provide a quality training program for all our students
- Ensure compliance with the VET Quality Framework and the relevant international education legislation
- Treat you in a fair and equitable manner
- Respect your rights and privacy
- Provide a supportive and safe learning environment
- Provide counselling and support services
- Allow you access to your personal records on request
- Give feedback on your academic progress.

Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Framework

SERO Institute is committed to meeting our obligations under the ESOS Framework. For detailed information click here: [ESOS Legislative Framework](#). Your rights and responsibilities as an international student on a student visa are listed in the Framework.

1. ACCESS, EQUITY, STUDENT SELECTION AND ADMISSION

Every student who meets the entry requirements (if applicable) as prescribed by the appropriate Training Package and Genuine Temporary Entrant guidelines, will be accepted into any training/assessment program. SERO Institute will incorporate the principles of equity into all programs. Students have equitable access to all programs irrespective of their gender, culture, linguistic background, race, location, socio- economic background or disability.

2. NATIONAL RECOGNITION

SERO Institute recognises the assessment decisions of any other Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and the Statements of Attainment and Qualifications issued by any other RTO.

3. LANGUAGE, LITERACY AND NUMERACY

SERO Institute recognises that all vocational training includes language, literacy and numeracy tasks and all the College trainers and assessors provide:

- course materials, resources and assessment tools and tasks that do not require students to have language, literacy and numeracy skills of more complexity than those used in the workplace for the competencies being taught/assessed;
- clear models of the language/literacy/numeracy task;
- opportunities for repeated and supported practice; and
- opportunities for independent practice.

Where some students require additional practice and training SERO Institute provides language support. If SERO Institute does not have specific support required by specific learners, SERO Institute will assist the student in identifying alternative training organisations that can provide the specialist support.

4. ASSESSMENT

SERO Institute is committed to ensuring valid and reliable assessment of achievements against industry competency standards and all assessment undertaken by SERO Institute remains consistent with the National Assessment Principles.

If you are required to repeat any subjects, miss any practical assessments (ie kitchen practical assessment), a payment of AUD\$200 for each unit will be charged.

Competency Based Assessment

Competency based assessment is a system for assessing a person's knowledge and skills. Assessment is based on actual skills and knowledge a person can demonstrate in the workplace or in other relevant contexts.

Throughout a course a portfolio of evidence will be collected and can take the form of the following assessment methods:

- **Short Answer** - Questions which need answers of a single word, a few words, a sentence or paragraph.
- **Project** - An exercise or research task from which time constraints have been largely removed. It usually involves the work being carried out without close supervision.
- **Group Discussion / Oral interview** - A means of generating information on a student's ability to listen, interpret, communicate ideas and sustain conversation.
- **Multiple Choice** - A question or incomplete statement followed by four or five options from which the student selects the best answer.
- **Case Study** - Allows opportunity for students to display process and problem-solving skills in a set of integrated tasks in a simulated context.
- **Practical Exercise** - A task which involves an application of knowledge. The work will be carried out under close supervision and may be open or closed book.
- **Observation** - Involves observing the demonstration of a student's performance.
- **Role Play** - Presents students with the opportunity of displaying behavioural and interpersonal skills in a simulated context.

Assessment activities undertaken by SERO Institute always follow the methodology outlined below:

1. Assessment procedures are fully explained to students. Throughout all training, students are regularly reminded of the ongoing availability of assessment.
2. Opportunities for Recognition (recognition of prior learning/recognition of current competence and credit transfer) are also discussed, as are any available flexible methods of assessment.

The appeals and reassessment process is also outlined.

5. RE-ASSESSMENT

If a student achieves an unsatisfactory result for any assessment item they will have a further two (2) opportunities to attempt the assessment. It is up to the trainer's discretion if the trainer will permit an additional attempt of an assessment.

6. ONLINE/ DISTANCE COURSES

SERO Institute does not offer any courses online or through distance delivery to international students on student visas enrolled in a full-time course. However, course content can be delivered online. It is preferable that students have their own laptops to enhance their learning experience.

7. STUDENT WELFARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

All students of SERO Institute are treated as individuals and are offered advice and support services, which assist students in achieving their identified outcomes.

Students have access to the Principal Executive Officer (PEO) and Student Support officers to get support, advice and guidance on general academic issues, welfare matters and difficulties.

SERO Institute does not offer professional counselling services; however, the College can arrange psychologists, professional career counsellors and guidance counsellors, if required. Fees may apply.

Please remember that we are here to help, please do not hesitate to contact any of the below Sero staff and they will happily assist.

Brisbane

Please contact our International Education Manager; Grant Mongon +61 (0) 468 346 765 grant@sero.edu.au

Gold Coast

Please contact our Operations Manager; Dallas Kenn 1800 206 010 dallas.kenn@sero.edu.au

Perth

Please contact our Campus Manager; Tracy Thomas +61 (0)404 664 967 tracy@sero.edu.au

8. ACCESS TO STUDENTS' RECORDS

Each student's records are available to them on request. Students' records are not available to other people unless SERO Institute is requested in writing by the student to allow such access. Please refer to the Privacy and Personal Information Policy for details

9. ISSUING OF CERTIFICATES

1. Students who have completed their qualification will be identified by SERO Institute administration staff, at the end of each term / period of study.
2. Administration staff will check the student record to confirm all the units of competency satisfactorily completed. They will also ensure that all the student's marked assessments and portfolio of evidence is included in the student file. If any completed assessment record is missing, the administration staff will follow up with the relevant trainer/s and/or student to locate any missing marked assessment/s.
3. Administration staff will check that student fees are paid in full. Certificates are not issued until all relevant fees have been paid in full.
4. The above process is completed within 30 days from the course end date.
5. In cases, where a student has completed additional units of competency due to clustering of units or

timetabling by SERO Institute, the student may request a separate 'Statement of Attainment' for the unit/s of competency completed. There is no charge for this service.

10. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

All SERO Institute students are expected to take responsibility in line with all current workplace practices and legislation for their own learning and behaviour during both on- and off-the-job training and assessment. Any breaches will result in disciplinary action, which may include: verbal warning, suspension of enrolment, cancellation of enrolment with Notice of Intention to Report being issued. The PEO will determine the most appropriate action, based on the nature of the breach. Refer to the *Code of Conduct* section in this Student Handbook.

11. ANTI-BULLYING

SERO Institute has a responsibility to ensure that the rights of its students are safeguarded. These includes the right to a learning environment free from discrimination and harassment. By definition, bullying is repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person or group by a more powerful person or group of persons. It may be manifested in many ways e.g. harassment (verbal, sexual or psychological), victimisation, alienation, coercion, intimidation, exclusion, ostracism, discrimination. Refer to SERO Institute policies for details.

SECTION IV: Location, Facilities and Services

1. SERO INSTITUTE MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

Our management is deeply committed to ensuring that you receive a high-quality training program and support services at SERO Institute.

All our staff are highly experienced and qualified to support you during your study program at SERO Institute.

With a multicultural staff complement, languages spoken include Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean and Thai.

2. SERO INSTITUTE OFFICE HOURS

SERO Institute Class times are Monday - Friday between 9:00am – 4:30pm

The administration office is open Monday - Friday from 8:30am - 5:00pm

We are closed on public holidays

3. SERO INSTITUTE TRAINING DELIVERY LOCATIONS

Delivery Address

- I. Ground Floor, 205 North Quay, Brisbane, Queensland 4000
- II. Level 3-4, 115 Queen Street, Brisbane, Queensland 4000
- III. 28 Eighth Avenue, Maylands, WA 6051
- IV. Nexus Centre, 96 Mount Gravatt Capalaba Road, Upper Mount Gravatt, Queensland 4122
- V. 6-8 Scarborough Street, Southport, Queensland 4215

In case of any relocation

SERO Institute will advise all students if there is a relocation of its premises at least 20 working days before the relocation.

4. RESOURCES

Online resources

SERO Institute students have unlimited wireless access on campus to assist with their online research. Computer facilities are available during college hours.

A number of online libraries are recommended to students, as most reference materials are now available online. The following are some of the recommended library collections online:

- National Library of Australia <http://www.nla.gov.au> (FREE)
- Libraries Australia <http://librariesaustralia.nla.gov.au/apps/kss> (FREE)
- Free e-books <http://www.e-booksdirectory.com> (FREE)
- The Free Library <http://www.thefreelibrary.com> (FREE)
- Questia <http://www.questia.com/Index.jsp> (Free trial available; Monthly subscription can be purchased)

Hard copy resources

The college has a small resource library to support the specific subjects taught in class.

As experienced educators, we recommend that students use the electronic resources and the Local City Council libraries for research, as is the common practice in academic and professional circles.

Computers and Internet

Bringing your own laptop/computer is required at SERO Institute. As all our learning resources are available online there is a significant advantage of having your own laptop/computer when studying. As well as using your laptop in class; research, self-study and submission of assessments can be done anywhere.

At a minimum the operating systems required for Laptops/computers are either Windows 10 or macOS 10.14 for Mac computers. The capability to produce Microsoft Office documents is also a requirement.

The college does have limited computer facilities for the use of students as a short term solution. Free wireless is available to students within the college building. Students MUST adhere to the college policies when using the college computers and Internet facilities.

Photocopying

Students will be provided all the required learning resources for their courses. Limited photocopying facilities are available to students through the Reception. Students are required to pay for this service. Alternatively, students can get materials photocopied externally.

ID Cards

Students will be issued a college ID card on arrival. The ID card can be used at various public places and public transport where concessions may be offered to students. Students must carry their ID cards at all times when they are on campus or undertaking any college related activity outside the campus. Replacement ID cards will be issued at an additional charge of \$20.

Public Transport concession

SERO Institute can assist in arranging transport concession where available, for its full-time students. Please contact Reception for assistance.

Car parks

The car parks on the campus are for staff and visitors only. Students are not permitted to park on the campus. Limited paid parking may be available close-by.

Student activities

SERO Institute organises some activities for students throughout the year. Students can sign-up for these activities through the college Reception. Depending on the activity students may be required to pay at cost.

5. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

We are always available to help you. We understand that you are new to Australia and may have a lot of questions when you start your studies and during your stay in Australia. Please do not hesitate to talk to us at any time.

- a. Academic, progress and general career advice or job search skills training.
- b. Bullying/ harassment matters.
- c. Health matters.
- d. General questions about Australia, Australian culture, expected norms of behaviour, dress code, food, shopping or anything else, or if you are feeling home-sick.

To access any of the above services one of the staff members below are the official point of contact in the location you are studying in:

Brisbane

Please contact our International Education Manager; Grant Mongon +61 (0) 468 346 765 grant@sero.edu.au

Gold Coast

Please contact our Operations Manager; Dallas Kenn 1800 206 010 dallas.kenn@sero.edu.au

Perth

Please contact our Campus Manager; Tracy Thomas +61 (0)404 664 967 tracy@sero.edu.au

- If you are under 18 years of age, one of the above staff members will be your Support Officer, depending which state you are studying in.
- For study/ training/ study plan/ assessment related matters, please contact your class teacher/ trainer in the first instance.
- For financial or fees-related matters, please contact Accounts receivable via email: ar@sero.edu.au

Counselling support and services

Counselling support services are available for all students regarding any welfare matters.

Specialist psychologist/professional counsellor. We can make arrangements for you, as required. We do not charge a fee for helping with the arrangements, however, these services are available on a fee-for service basis.

Other options for support include:

While we do have internal staff capable of offering welfare and guidance services, we will work with you to accommodate and refer you to relevant professional services such as:

- Centrelink 131 021
- Mission Australia Helpline 1300 886 999
- Life Line 131 114
- Interpreting Service 131 450
- Marist180 (07) 3368 1272

SECTION V: SERO Institute Course Information

1. STUDY PERIODS/DURATION AND BREAKS

Training is offered by SERO Institute in accordance with pre-determined study and break/holiday periods, as defined per each course of study. Details of specific study periods and holidays are provided to you at orientation.

Students requiring additional holidays which are outside of the pre-determined break/holiday periods, must gain approval from Student Services using SERO's Holiday Application Form. This form must be completed and returned to Student Services 2 weeks prior to the start date of the additional holidays being applied for. Holidays must be for complete weeks, starting on a Monday, this is to ensure you do not miss any days you have paid for. ELICOS students may only take holidays which are within the approved holiday period granted by the Department of Home Affairs. Please note, SERO Institute will not approve any holidays outside of this period.

2. TIMETABLES

A detailed class timetable, as relevant to your intake date, will be provided at Orientation.

3. WHAT TO EXPECT ON YOUR FIRST DAY AT SERO INSTITUTE

As a new student at SERO Institute, you will receive an email from SERO Institute approximately one week prior to your commencement date welcoming you.

You will be expected to arrive at 8:30 am on Orientation day and at 9:00 am on regular class days. On Orientation day, you should bring a copy of your current address, a pen and some writing paper and your laptop. You might wish to bring something to eat and drink during the day, however there are a few food outlets in close proximity to the College. You will not need anything else on the first day.

On Orientation day you will be introduced to College staff, shown around the College facilities and your Student ID card will be organised. You will also be provided with detailed information about the College, your course, your rights and responsibilities and other important information about your enrolment at SERO Institute.

4. YOUR OBLIGATIONS AS AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AT SERO INSTITUTE

We will endeavor to provide you with high quality training programs and support services. We hope you enjoy your study with us.

As an international student at SERO Institute, you will be required to comply with the following:

- **Submit your assessments by the due date.** If you need an extension, please seek an extension via email from your trainer. We normally allow two weeks' extensions, except in compassionate or compelling circumstances that warrant additional time.
- **Maintain satisfactory academic progress.** This is a condition of your student visa. You are encouraged to talk to your teachers if you are experiencing difficulties in coping with your academic program. The college will try and help you with strategies and support options. Ongoing failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress can result in the cancellation of your student visa. See further details in the *Course Progress Policy* included in this handbook.
- **Maintain satisfactory attendance.** Although SERO Institute focuses on monitoring progression of all international students enrolled in CRICOS registered courses, when students have been identified as being 'at risk' (i.e. if they fail 10%, 20% and 30% or more units during a single teaching period) an intervention strategy will be implemented. Whilst the intervention strategy is in place, attendance will be monitored

- and students must maintain a minimum of 80% attendance over the next study period.
- **Maintain Overseas Student Health Cover** for the duration of your studies in Australia, whilst on a Student Visa.
 - **Provide SERO Institute your current residential address and contact details.** Students MUST notify College Reception within 7 days if you change your address in Australia or your mobile number and email.
 - **Follow College rules, policies and procedures:** You are expected to follow all College rules and policies.

Code of Conduct

SERO Institute is passionate about providing a safe and welcoming educational facility. We take the behaviour, actions and teachings in our institute SERIOUSLY.

The Code of Conduct is established to ensure both students and staff are provided with an environment where they are free of any behaviour which may cause a negative impact.

All students and staff are expected to follow all rules and policies.

- No smoking is permitted on campus, inside or outside the building. Smoking is banned in public and commercial buildings in Australia by law and you must not smoke within 5 metres from the entrance of any building. Also, if you choose to smoke, please make sure that you put all your cigarette butts in an ashtray/bin. Public bins and ashtrays are available in most public areas. Littering in a public place is not accepted in Australia.
- Aggressive behaviour, bullying or racism is not tolerated.
- The Institute prohibits the use of illegal drugs on the premises and during other institute activities. Appropriate action will be taken against individuals who breach this policy.
- Staff or students are not permitted to possess or consume alcohol on the Institute premises except under special circumstances approved of by the Senior Management.
- Acts of vandalism, including graffiti will be dealt with by the police where appropriate.
- Classrooms are intended for learning and teaching purposes and must only be used in the presence of a teacher. No food or drinks are permitted in the classrooms or study areas at any time. Food and drink are permitted only in specially designated areas.
- All equipment belonging to SERO Institute should be treated with respect and you should advise a staff member of SERO Institute if anything is not working properly.
- No mobile phones are to be used during class.
- All break times must be taken according to the times allocated by the teacher.
- Students must be seated in class prior to the expected start time. Class times will start at the times indicated on the course timetables unless otherwise notified.
- General housekeeping must be undertaken before leaving the class. Please do not leave rubbish lying around, but place it into the bins provided. Make sure the doors and windows are shut and lights and relevant equipment turned off.
- Give consideration to others and keep the toilets and other public areas clean and hygienic after your use.
- A reasonable standard of dress and hygiene is to be maintained at all times. It is recommended that closed shoes be worn at all times.
- SERO Institute trainers and staff can refuse admittance to class, if you do not turn up with the prescribed textbooks, course materials, learning materials, tool kits and appropriate OH&S clothing and equipment, if applicable.

- Any serious breach of the institute IT Acceptable Use Policy can lead to cancellation of your account/enrolment.
- All students and staff must comply with WHS policies and procedures at all times.
- Any serious breach of any other Institute policy can also result in cancellation of your enrolment. Institute policies are available at the Institute Reception.
- Institute Fees and charges: Students **MUST** pay their course fees in advance, by the due date, as per the written agreement. If fees are not paid on time, staff will attempt to make contact with you to arrange an appointment with the CRICOS Administration and you will be given the opportunity to discuss any compassionate and compelling circumstances and get your fees up to date. Should staff be unable to establish contact with you, a week after fees were due, SERO Institute will charge a late fee of \$50 and will send a Notification of Intention to Report for outstanding fees, which may lead to cancellation of your enrolment.
- Continuation in the course is dependent upon satisfactory academic progress and payment of the required tuition fees before the commencement of subsequent study periods.
- If you are required to repeat any subjects, miss any practical assessments (ie kitchen practical assessment), a payment of AUD\$200 for each unit will be charged.
- Students are required to pay AUD\$30 for any resubmission of units after three attempts.
- Text books fees are AUD\$15 per text book plus a delivery fee.

SECTION VI: Important policies for international students

1. COURSE PROGRESS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure SERO Institute's compliance with the National Code 2018, Standard 8 Overseas student visa requirements. SERO Institute has implemented a Progress Policy and Procedures for CRICOS Providers of VET Courses.

Policy

Failure to successfully complete in 10% or more units in a single study period (Study periods are identified by Qualification in Appendix A of the Policy) will trigger a review of academic progress and the implementation of an intervention strategy by the Institute.

Units that have been completed at the end of a study period and have a final unit result will be evaluated by SERO Institute in accordance with the SERO Institute – CRICOS Monitoring Student Progression Procedure.

Non- Completion of a unit means not having been deemed "Competent" on all assessment tasks, theory and practical for a unit where the student has been afforded ample opportunity to complete the tasks required.

Procedure - Summary*

1. Under 10% Ongoing Student Progression	2. 10-20% Unsatisfactory Progression - Advice Letter	3. 20-30% Unsatisfactory Progression - Warning Letter	4. Over 30% Unsatisfactory Progression - Advice on Intention to Cancel - Letter
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*SERO Institute – CRICOS Monitoring Student Progression Procedure

On a Monthly basis, SERO Institute will review the course progress of all students and identify those students who have failed to complete 10% or more units in the study period as per Appendix A: Study Periods - VET Courses Monitored for Academic Progression. These students will be emailed an Advice Letter and will be expected to attend a course progress interview with their Trainer to complete an Academic Progression Plan as per the SERO Institute – CRICOS Monitoring Student Progression Procedure

On a Monthly basis, any students identified as having failed to complete 20% or more units in the study period as per Appendix A: Study Periods - VET Courses Monitored for Academic Progression – these students will be emailed and posted a Warning Letter and will be required to attend a course progress interview with their Trainer to complete an Academic Progression Plan as per the SERO Institute – CRICOS Monitoring Student Progression Procedure

During the course progress interview, the student will be advised that unsatisfactory course progress of 30% or more will lead to them being reported to the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) and their visa cancelled, depending on the outcome of any appeals process.

In creating the Academic Progression Plan the Trainer and/or Academic Manager will consider compassionate or compelling circumstances. The Academic Progression Plan must be signed by all parties involved. Students placed on monthly review meetings must attend all meetings.

On a Monthly basis, any students identified as having failed to complete 30% or more of the required units based on the qualifications Study Schedule or fails to meet course progress requirements as per an agreed Academic Progression Plan, they will be notified in writing of SERO Institute's intention to report the student to DHA for not achieving satisfactory course.

SERO Institute will maintain the student's enrolment throughout the internal appeals process and one external appeal process., SERO Institute may report the student to DHA after a negative outcome from the external appeal process.

Early Intervention

Early intervention may be implemented anytime during the qualification based on Trainer Feedback to the Training Team. If the student has not successfully completed all assessment tasks based on their study schedule, they will be deemed as being 'at risk'.

At any point during the qualification, if a Trainer believes a student is struggling and may not achieve satisfactory progress, an early intervention may be activated. The early intervention requires a course progress interview with the Trainer where strategies will be implemented to assist the student to successfully complete the unit.

A record of all intervention strategies implemented and all associated documentation will be kept in the student's file.

Appeals

A student may appeal SERO Institute's decision to report on the following grounds:

- If there was an error in recording or calculating the student's assessment accurately and that the student actually made satisfactory progress;
- If there were compassionate or compelling reasons for the lack of progress. Ongoing support will be given to the student via the Intervention Strategy Agreement;

Compassionate or Compelling Circumstances

Compassionate or compelling circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the student and they have an impact on the student's ability to progress through the course. These could include:

- Serious illness or injury where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend class
- Bereavement of close family members such as parents, siblings or grandparents (where possible, a death certificate should be provided)
- Major political upheaval or natural disaster in their home country requiring their emergency travel and this has impacted their studies.
- A traumatic experience, including:
 - Involvement in or witnessing a serious accident
 - A serious crime committed against the student
 - The student was a witness to a serious crime.

These cases should be supported by police, qualified counsellor or psychologist report and copies of the documents should be kept in the student's file.

2. ELICOS MONITORING ATTENDANCE

Attendance Requirements

As an ELICOS (English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students) student, you must attend at least 80% of the scheduled course contact hours. If you don't maintain an attendance of 80%, SERO is obligated to report the matter to the Department of Home Affairs for further action.

*** Please note:** If you are intending to take holidays you must complete apply for the holidays within a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the requested leave date.

Monitoring of Attendance

SERO Institute will monitor your attendance weekly. If you are having attendance issues, a trainer will advise you that you are at risk of not meeting 80% attendance and you are falling behind on your attendance record.

You will receive a warning letter if you are having attendance issues. The warning letters are sent to you at the following points:

- a. If your attendance drops to 90% (Warning Letter 1);
- b. If your attendance drops below 85% (Warning Letter 2);

If you receive a warning letter you will be offered support services to help improve your attendance.

Formally Addressing Attendance Issues

If your attendance rate is 80% or below after receiving warning letters, a Notice of Intent to Report will be issued, which outlines:

- a. The notice of intent to report your attendance to the Department of Home Affairs; and
- b. Your right to apply for an internal appeal of the decision within 20 working days from the date outlined in the Notice of Intent to Report.

If you do not access the internal appeals process within the 20 working day period or withdraw from your course, then SERO will report you to the Department of Home Affairs for further action.

3. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Principles

SERO Institute will ensure that:

- All students have access to the complaints policy and procedures and their rights as consumers.
- SERO Institute will maintain the student's enrolment during the complaint process.
- The complainant is provided with information about the complaints procedure.
- All complaints are dealt with confidentially, fairly and promptly.
- The complaint process is commenced within 10 working days from the date of complaint.
- Due to confidentiality reasons, the number of people involved in the resolution process will be limited.
- Officials involved in any aspect of the process will maintain absolute confidentiality at all times.
- The complaint resolution procedure promotes a conciliatory approach using mediation and open communication while acknowledging that in some instances this may be challenging.
- The rights of the complainant and respondent will be protected throughout the complaint resolution process.
- All parties have the right to representation during the complaint resolution process.
- Victimisation of complainants, respondents or anyone one else involved in the complaint resolution process will not be tolerated.
- The complainant is provided with a written response including the outcome and reasons for the outcome within 20 business days.
- Complainants reserve the right to lodge a complaint with external agencies at any point during the complaint resolution process.

Types of complaints

The complaints may be about academic or non-academic matters including, but not limited to:

- Application procedures
- Marketing information
- Training delivery or content
- Trainers, Assessors or other staff
- Assessment methods or assessment content
- Student progress
- Issuing of Awards
- A third party delivering services on SERO Institute's behalf
- A student or group of students of SERO Institute
- Discrimination
- Harassment, bullying or victimisation
- Breach of privacy
- Individual conflict arising from perceived inappropriate behaviours
- Fees or other financial matters
- Fines and payments

Procedure

Internal complaints and appeals

The internal complaints and appeals processes are conciliatory and non-legal.

1) Complaints against other Students

- a) Grievances brought by a Student against another student will be dealt with under the Institute's Code of Conduct Policy.

2) Informal Complaints Resolution

- a) In the first instance, SERO Institute requests there is an attempt to informally resolve the issue through mediation/informal resolution of the complaint.
- b) Students should continue to attend classes (if applicable) while the complaint is being processed.
- c) Students should contact their Trainer/ Teacher in the first instance to attempt mediation/informal resolution of the complaint.
- d) If Students are not satisfied with the outcome, they should contact the Student Support Officer who will attempt to resolve the matter.
- e) If the complaint is about the Student Support Officer, it can be directly brought to the PEO's attention.
- f) If the matter cannot be resolved through mediation, the matter will be referred to the PEO in writing and SERO Institute's internal formal complaints and appeals handling procedure will be followed.

3) Formal Complaints Handling Procedure

- a) The process of the complaints procedure is confidential and any complaints or appeals are a matter between the parties concerned and those directly involved in the complaints handling process.
- b) The Student must notify the Institute in writing (a student may complete a Student's Complaints and Appeals Form) detailing the nature and details of the complaint or appeal.
- c) Written complaints or appeals are to be lodged with the PEO.
- d) Where the internal complaints and appeals process is being accessed by an international Student because the student has received notice by the Institute that the Institute intends to report him/her for unsatisfactory course attendance, unsatisfactory course progress or suspension or cancellation of enrolment, the student has 20 working days from the date of receipt of notification in which to lodge a written appeal.
- e) Complaints and appeals processes are available to students at no cost.
- f) Each complainant or appellant has the opportunity to present his/her case to the PEO.
- g) Students and / or the Institute may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at all relevant meetings
- h) The formal complaints and appeals process will commence within 10 working days of the lodgement of the complaint or appeal with the PEO.
- i) Once the PEO has come to a decision regarding the complaint or appeal, the Student will be informed in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the outcome, and a copy will be retained on the Student's file. A copy will also be retained in the internal 'Complaints and Appeals Register'.
- j) If the grievance procedure finds in favour of the complainant, SERO Institute will immediately implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required, and advise the Student of the outcome.
- k) SERO Institute undertakes to finalise all grievance and complaints within 20 business days.
- l) However, should detailed investigation be required, the process may take more than 60 days. The

- complainant or appellant will be notified of the expected duration of the investigation process should the process take 21-60 days.
- m) If more than 60 days are required, SERO Institute will advise the complainant/appellant in writing, the reasons for why more than 60 days are required. SERO Institute will regularly update the complainant or appellant of the progress of the matter.
 - n) If the Complainant or appellant is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint or appeal, SERO Institute will refer the complainant to the Resolution Institute (at a shared cost with SERO Institute) or the Overseas Student Ombudsman (no cost), the student can choose. This is the commencement of the external appeals process.
 - o) SERO Institute will maintain the Student's enrolment throughout the internal appeals process, and the Student must maintain their course progression.

External Appeals Processes

Overseas Students: If the student wishes to lodge an external appeal or complain about the decision, they can contact the Overseas Students Ombudsman. The Overseas Students Ombudsman offers a free and independent service for overseas Students who have a complaint or want to lodge an external appeal about a decision made by their private education or training provider. See the Overseas Students Ombudsman [website www.oso.gov.au](http://www.oso.gov.au) or phone 1300 362 072 for more information.

They can complain to the Overseas Students Ombudsman if they believe the provider has not followed their policy or treated them fairly.

The Ombudsman can consider complaints about:

- refusing admission to a course
- fees and refunds
- course or provider transfers
- course progress or attendance
- cancellation of enrolment
- accommodation or work arranged by the provider
- Incorrect advice given by an education agent.

The Overseas Students Ombudsman can also investigate complaints about education agents who have an agreement with a provider to represent them in Australia or overseas. Students can also complain if a provider has failed to take action or is taking too long to take some action, like not providing course results in the normal timeframe, or not providing services included in the student's written agreement with the provider.

If Students have a complaint about the quality of training and assessment being delivered by SERO Institute, they may be eligible to submit a complaint to ASQA. <http://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/complaints.html>

They can also contact the local state & territory consumer protection agency (sometimes called 'consumer affairs' or 'fair trading') who can provide information about their rights and options.

SERO Institute will identify the potential causes of complaints and appeals and take appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of recurrence, for continuous improvement purposes

Written records of all complaints and appeals and their outcomes will be maintained in the relevant person's file

4. REFUND POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Purpose

Refund information provided to students is to be designed to ensure that all details relating to fees and charges are known prior to enrolment and comply with relevant legislation regulations and standards. This policy will result in a fair and equitable refund policy for students of SERO Institute.

Scope

This policy relates to students of SERO Institute and applies to all staff and management of SERO Institute.

Policy Statement

SERO Institute ensures that the Refund Policy adheres to the requirements of the Standards for Registered Training Organisation (RTO) 2015 and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.

In compliance with Standard 3, this policy administers the following institutional standards as part of SERO Institute's operational and organisation standards:

1. SERO Institute's written agreements with the students contain the amounts that may or may not be repaid to the student (including any course money collected by education agents on behalf of SERO Institute).
2. SERO Institute's written agreements with students clearly state the process for students to make an application for a refund.
3. SERO Institute's written agreements contain a plain English explanation of what happens in the event of a course not being delivered.
4. SERO Institute's written agreements contain the statement, "This agreement, and the availability of complaints and appeals processes, does not remove the right of the student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws".

Application

Refund of the fees will only be granted in accordance with the refund policy set out below. Enrolment fees (or the equivalent amount taken out of paid tuition fees, if original enrolment fee was waived), are non-refundable under any circumstances, except in the unlikely circumstances where SERO Institute is unable to provide the course.

Refund policy

Refund of the fees will only be granted in accordance with the refund policy set out below. Enrolment fees (or equivalent amount taken out of paid tuition fees, if original enrolment fee was waived), are non-refundable under any circumstances, except in the unlikely circumstance where SERO Institute is unable to provide the course.

- Tuition fees and course credit are not transferable.
- One of Administration fee of \$200 to process a refund will be charged for visa rejection refunds, the calculation of the administration fee will be in accordance to section 47E of the ESOS ACT 2000.
- If the 50% refund is less than \$1,000, then late cancellation fee of \$1,000 will be charged.
- SERO Institute reserves the right to cancel or postpone any courses prior to their scheduled commencement dates, if necessary. In such circumstances, if a student is unable to enrol in a similar course at SERO Institute, all fees will be refunded within 28 days.

- If written notice of withdrawal is received from a candidate at least 28 days prior to the commencement of the course (based on an original course start date), full refund, less an administration charge of AUD\$200, enrolment fee of AUD\$200 (or equivalent amount taken out of paid tuition fees) and where applicable, any agent's fees.

	If you cancel more than 28 days before original relevant start date	If you cancel less than 28 days before original relevant start date	If you cancel upon original relevant start date
Enrolment	Nil	Nil	Nil
Tuition	100%	50%	Nil
Resource	100%	50%	Nil

- The calculation applied for fees paid in advance and were a course of study is cancelled before the agreed Completion Date, SERO Institute will calculate the Cancellation Fee in accordance with the table below:

Notification Period	Refund	Cancellation Fee
More than 4 weeks before course commences	Full refund less cancellation Fee	\$200
4 weeks or less before course commencement	50% of a course fee less cancellation fee	50% of course fee
After course commencement	No Refund	100% of course fee

- If an extension to the student's visa is not granted and the course has commenced, a refund will not be issued to the student for the course duration that has already finished
- If the student seeks, and is granted approval by SERO Institute, to transfer to another provider prior to completion of six months' study of the principal course, SERO Institute will not refund any of the fees paid for the course. The student will also be required to pay any outstanding fees for the course.
- If the Student's enrolment is cancelled due to infringement of SERO Institute's disciplinary policy or breach of student visa conditions, no refund of any course money will be granted.
- No refund will be issued for monies paid to SERO Institute for Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC), airport pick-up, or accommodation bookings. Student may have to apply directly to the Overseas Health Cover provider for a refund.

No Fee Refund

- if a student cancels their enrolment or fails to attend a program or course after the start of the program, except for visa refusal or any circumstances deemed to be compassionate and compelling by the PEO, SERO Institute will not refund any of the fees paid for the course as relevant to tuition up and until the end of the current teaching period within which the student's course cancellation is finalised. The Student will also be required to pay any outstanding balances for the course, as relevant to tuition up and until the end of the current teaching period within which course cancellation is finalised. No refund will be issued for monies paid to SERO Institute for Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC), airport pick-up, or accommodation bookings
- refunds for any monies received by SERO Institute on behalf of the student for services other than tuition fees must be requested from the company delivering the service and students will be subject to the respective companies refund policies
- if an extension to the student's visa is not granted and the course has commenced, a refund will not be issued to the student for the course duration that has already finished
- if the student seeks, and is granted approval by SERO Institute, to transfer to another provider prior to completion of six months study of the principal course, SERO Institute will not refund any of the fees paid for the course as relevant to tuition up and until the end of the current teaching period within which the release

is finalised. The student will also be required to pay any outstanding fees for the course, as relevant to tuition up and until the end of the current teaching period within which the release is granted, prior to release

- if the Student's enrolment is cancelled due to infringement of SERO Institute's disciplinary policy or breach of student visa conditions, no refund of any course money will be granted.

Full Refund

- If your relevant visa application is denied, 100% of pre-paid course fees will be refunded directly to the student. All other fees are subject to the below terms. Written notification is required by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA).
- In the unlikely event that SERO Institute is unable to deliver your course in full, you will be offered a refund of all the course money you have paid to date. The refund will be paid to you within 4 weeks of the day on which the course ceased being provided. Alternatively, you may be offered enrolment in an alternative course by SERO Institute at no extra cost to you. You have the right to choose whether you would prefer a full refund of course fees, or to accept a place in another course. If you choose placement in another course, we will ask you to sign a document to indicate that you accept the placement. If SERO Institute is unable to provide a refund or place you in an alternative course, the Australian Government's Tuition Protection Service (TPS) will assist you with your placement in an alternative course or manage any applicable refunds.
- If student has overpaid to SERO Institute fee than the overpaid fees will be fully refunded.

Partial Refund

- If a student cancels their enrolment or fails to attend a program or course after the start of the program, except for visa refusal or any circumstances deemed to be compassionate and compelling by the PEO. The refund amount shall be the multiplication of weekly tuition fee studied weeks + 2 weeks 'notice.

Example refund amount = average weekly tuition fee + 2 weeks' notice x remaining course weeks.

- Refunds for any monies received by SERO Institute on behalf of the student for services other than tuition fees must be requested from the company delivering the service and students will be subject to the respective companies refund policies.

Requests for Refund of Tuition Fees

A student who wishes to apply for a refund of tuition fees in accordance with this Refund Policy should do so in writing and stating reasons and relevant details by submitting it to the Principal Executive Officer (PEO).

Payment of Refund

All refunds for which a student is eligible will be forwarded, within 28 days, to the person who paid the fees in his or her home country, unless the student is transferring to another institution in Australia (subject to Visa conditions), in which case any refund may be remitted to that institution, as authorised by the student or his/her guardian. SERO Institute will provide the student with a statement detailing the calculation of the refund.

Approvals

All refunds must be approved by the PEO. Exemptions to any of the abovementioned cases may only occur where the student has extenuating, or compassionate grounds as determined by the PEO. "This agreement, and the availability of complaints and appeals processes, does not remove the right of the student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws".

Non-payment of fees and debt collection for all students

Students are required to pay all their course fees as they become due (as per the conditions outlined in the enrolment documentation). If fees are not paid on time, staff will attempt to make contact with the student to arrange an appointment with the PEO and they will be given the opportunity to discuss any compassionate and compelling circumstances and get their fees up to date. Should staff be unable to establish contact with the student, a week after fees were due, SERO Institute will charge a late fee of \$50 and will send a Notification of Intention to Report for outstanding fees, which may lead to cancellation of the student's enrolment. Ongoing delays in payment of SERO Institute fees may result in cancellation of enrolment.

Refund Policy

Under Standard 3.2, SERO Institute is required to include information about what would happen in the case of both student and provider default. Students have the right for refund when SERO Institute has:

1. Failed to provide the course at the agreed location and starting date
2. Ceased providing courses to students after it starts and before it is completed

Upon enrolment, the signed statement of fees and availability of complaints and appeals process does not remove the rights of the student to take action under Australia's consumer law.

- If a student withdraws from his or her course and would like a refund, or to have fees reduced, they need to make a request in writing and submit a completed refund/remittance form.
- Applications for refunds must be received within 21 days of cancellation.
- Assessing refund requests will be based on the cost of the services SERO Institute provided to the student.

Refund Procedure

If your request for a refund is approved:

1. We'll let you know our decision in writing along with any refund or adjustment notice.
2. All refund requests are to be authorised by the Principal Executive Officer and applications processed within twenty-eight (28) days of the application being received.
3. Refund requests are to be entered into the student management system and copies of evidence are stored within the student's file.

5. TRANSFER BETWEEN PROVIDERS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Overseas students are restricted from transferring from their principal course of study for a period of Six months. This restriction also applies to any course(s) packaged with their principal course of study.

A provider must not knowingly enrol a student wishing to transfer from another registered provider's course prior to the student completing Six months of his or her principal course of study except where:

- the original registered provider has ceased to be registered or the course in which the student is enrolled has ceased to be registered;
- the original registered provider has released the student;
- the original registered provider has had a sanction imposed on its registration by the Australian Government or state or territory government that prevents the student from continuing his or her principal course, or
- any government sponsor of the student considers the change to be in the student's best interest and has provided written support for that change.

SERO Institute will not seek to enrol a student who has not yet completed Six months of their principal course of study with another registered provider.

Students can apply a release to enable them to transfer to another education provider. Applications for transfer from a student must:

- Be in writing;
 - Relate to and provide details about the student's individual circumstances;
 - Provide details as to the reasons why the application should be approved.
- In order to apply for release, students must have a letter from the receiving provider that a valid offer of enrolment has been made.
 - Students under 18 years of age MUST also have;
 - Written evidence that the student's parent(s)/legal guardian supports the transfer
 - Written confirmation that the new provider will accept responsibility for approving the student's accommodation, support, and general welfare arrangements where the student is not living with a parent(s)/legal guardian or a suitable nominated relative
 - Evidence that the student is always in DHA approved welfare and accommodation arrangements
 - All applications for transfer will be considered within 10 working days and the applicant notified of the decision. This period may be extended if the applicant fails to provide all relevant information/ documentation, however in such instances the College will advise the student of the additional information/documentation required to make the decision.
 - Applications to transfer to another registered provider may have visa implications. The student is advised to contact the Department of Home Affairs office as soon as possible to discuss any implications.

Issue of releases

A letter of release will be issued when SERO Institute is satisfied that:

- A course is academically unsuitable for the student
- The course the student wishes to transfer to better meets the long term goals of the student, whether these relate to future work, education etc.
- Compassionate or compelling reasons for the transfer exist
- The student can provide evidence that he/she was misled by SERO Institute or its appointed representative regarding the course or SERO INSTITUTE.

If the application is successful SERO Institute will

- provide a letter of release at no cost to the student
- Update PRISMS

The Release letter will include information about whether or not, the student:

- Demonstrated a commitment to studies during the course;
- Had a good attendance record; and
- Paid all fees for the course.

Release not granted

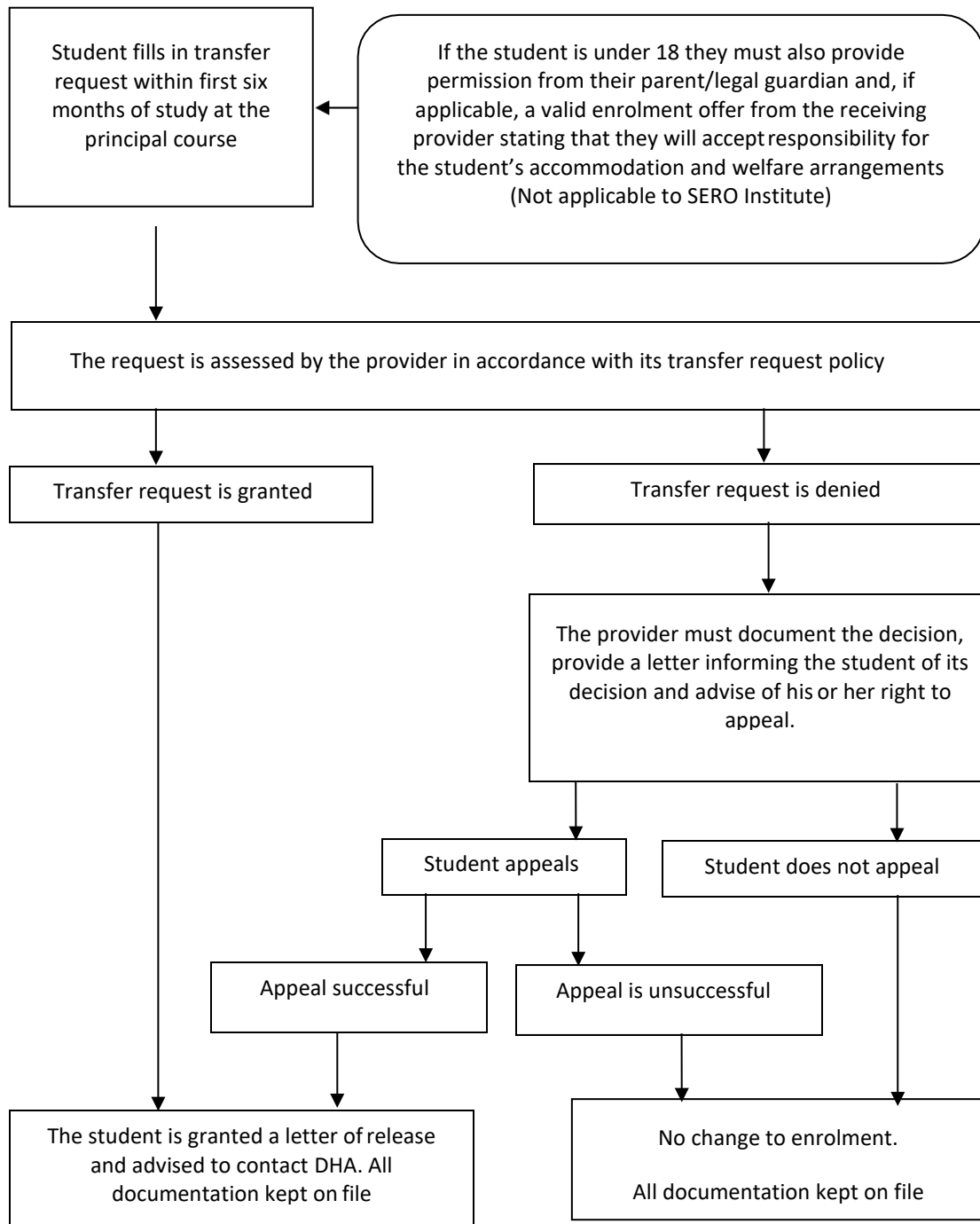
A letter of release will be refused if a student is unable to provide satisfactory evidence that his/her course does not meet their long-term goals or it is academically unsuitable, or that the student cannot demonstrate compassionate or compelling circumstances for the transfer exit.

A release request will **not** be granted if:

- SERO Institute forms the view that the student is trying to avoid being reported to the Department of Home Affairs for failure to meet the provider's academic progress requirements;
- The transfer may jeopardise the student's progressions through a package of courses;
- The intended course will not provide adequate preparation for further study, nor be recognised by higher education or VET providers as meeting their entry requirements and the transfer would be detrimental to the student's future study plans;
- SERO Institute fees for the course that the student is currently enrolled in have not been paid in full. This includes any balance instalment payments applicable to the course. (Students are advised to read the SERO Institute Refund Policy prior to seeking a release, as any pre-paid fees for future courses within a packaged program will not be refunded after the student has commenced their study at SERO Institute)

Applicants will be informed in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the decision and the factors taken into consideration given the student's individual circumstances. All relevant documents will be retained in the student's file.

Students whose request for transfer has been refused may appeal the decision in accordance with SERO Institute complaints and appeals policy.



Internal Campus Transfers

Internal campus transfer requests are subject to enrolment availability and will only be considered during a teaching period if special circumstances apply. Students wishing to transfer their studies to another SERO campus must complete and submit the Campus Transfer Form at least 2 weeks prior to the date by which the transfer request is to take effect. Should you have any questions please speak directly with Student Services staff to discuss your concerns.

6. DEFERMENT, SUSPENSION AND CANCELLATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the processes by which SERO Institute will assess applications from international students for deferral (delayed commencement), suspension (leave of absence) or cancellation (withdrawal) of their enrolment to ensure compliance with the National Code 20018 – Standard 13.

Definitions

- Deferment – postpone the start of study
- Suspension – temporarily put studies on hold will already enrolled
- Cancellation – permanently cancel an enrolment
- Non-Commencement – student does not commence on their expected start date of their CoE and has not contact SERO Institute to defer their course

Deferring

Students wishing to defer or temporarily suspend their enrolment may only do so when there are compelling or compassionate circumstances. Compelling or compassionate circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Serious illness
- Serious illness or death of a family member necessitating a return to the student's home country
- Serious injury
- Major upheaval in home country requiring student to return home
- Natural disaster
- Unavailability of courses
- Visa delay

If a student wishes to defer, they must complete a Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment Form and lodge with SERO Institute prior to course commencement. They must also attach any documentary evidence verifying their situation (for example, a medical certificate). SERO Institute will assess the application and make a decision within seven business days. Suspension of studies is allowed for a maximum period of six months. If an international student's application for deferral or suspension is approved, SERO Institute will notify the Department of Home Affairs through Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS). If the application is successful, a new CoE will be issued to the student.

Suspension

If a student wishes to suspend their studies, they must complete a Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment Form and lodge with SERO Institute. They must also attach any documentary evidence verifying their situation. Suspension of studies will only be granted if the application meets certain criteria:

- a. Compelling circumstances such as:
 - i. Serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend workshops;
 - ii. Bereavement of a close family member such as a parent or grandparent (where possible a death certificate should be provided);
 - iii. Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel;

or

- iv. A traumatic experience such as involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident, or witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime. Such cases as these should be supported by reports from police or psychologists.
- b. Compassionate grounds

Suspension or cancellation of enrolment by SERO Institute

SERO Institute has the right to cancel or suspend a student's enrolment in the following circumstances:

- If a student submits fraudulent documents to gain admission to SERO Institute
- If a student does not maintain satisfactory course progress in accordance with the Course Progress Policy for international students
- If a student does not commence on their expected start date of their CoE and has not contact SERO Institute to defer their course
- If the student behaves in a way which could potentially bring the Institute into disrepute
- If a student does not pay the required fees
- If a student behaves in a way that is a threat to their own health and safety and/or a threat to the health and safety of another student or staff member.
- If the student has received two formal warnings from the Institute for disobeying Institute rules. A formal warning will be issued if a student:
 - I. Disobeys any Institute rules as set out in the Student Handbook
 - II. Knowingly engages in material plagiarism, cheating or academic misconduct
 - III. Does not abide by the email and Internet rules as stipulated by the Institute
 - IV. Engages in any form of harassment (racial, sexual or verbal) or bullying towards another student or staff member
 - V. Misuses or wilfully damages Homestay or Institute facilities, equipment or property.

Cancelling an enrolment

Students wishing to cancel their enrolment must complete a Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment Form and attach all supporting documentation. The student will receive notification in writing of the result of the request. If the student has not completed the first six months of their principal course they must provide a letter of offer from an alternative provider. See policy on Transfer between Providers.

PLEASE NOTE: Deferring, suspending or cancelling your enrolment may affect your student visa.

Non-commencement of studies

If a student (whose visa is already granted) does not commence on their expected start date of their CoE and has not contacted SERO Institute to defer their course, will be contacted by Student Services within 2 days of the agreed starting date.

If the student does not commence the course or request a deferral within 7 days of the agreed starting date, Student Services will send a first and final warning letter informing the student of the Intention to Cancel due to Non-Commencement.

SERO Institute will initiate the process to report a "Non-commencement of studies" within PRISMS within 14 days of the agreed starting date. Students who are reported to DHA through PRISMS for a "Non-commencement of studies" do not have the right to access SERO Institute appeals policy.

SERO Institute will notify the student in writing of its intention to cancel or suspend their enrolment. Students may appeal any decision to cancel or suspend their enrolment. This appeal must be made in writing to the PEO of the Institute within 20 business days from the date of the Intention to Cancel or Suspend Notice. Students should refer to the Institute's Complaints and Appeals Procedures if they wish to lodge an appeal. If an international student's enrolment is suspended or cancelled, SERO Institute will notify the Department of Home Affairs through Provider Registered International Student Management System (PRISMS).

NB. If the student accesses the SERO Institute internal complaints and appeals process, the suspension and cancellation of the student's enrolment cannot take effect until the internal process is completed, unless extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student apply.

7. PRIVACY AND PERSONAL INFORMATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

SERO Institute (SERO) recognises the importance of your privacy and understands your concerns about the security of your personal information. This privacy policy describes generally how we manage your personal information and safeguard your privacy.

SERO Principles

1. Personal information is only collected where necessary to fulfil the organisations functions
2. Those giving personal information are informed of the purpose of collection and how their personal information will be used
3. Records containing personal information are kept secure and protected from loss or misuse
4. Students are informed of the right to access their own personal information
5. Permission is obtained from individuals before their details are used in publications, web sites or other marketing materials.

Procedures

Collection of Personal Information

The types of personal information we may collect and hold includes (but is not limited to):

- information you give us when you apply to enrol in a course, including your name, address, occupation and contact details
- information about other individuals we collect during the enrolment process
- information about other people dealing with SERO

Personal information is collected through you completing our enrolment forms, telephone discussions, face to face meetings, business cards, web-forms and email list subscriptions. We may also collect personal information through our SERO social media sites, Google and other web-based analytics sites directly used for the purposes of SERO marketing and communication activities. These third party sites have their own privacy policies.

Generally, information collected may include:

- Name
- Address
- Date of Birth
- Gender
- Nationality
- Country of birth
- Next of kin details
- Contact Details

- Payment Details
- Financial Details
- Electronic details such as email address
- Unique Student Identifier Number (USI)
- AVETMISS information to comply with the Data Provisions Requirements 2012 such as, but not limited to: disability (if applicable), educational history; ethnicity; English, literacy and numeracy proficiency
- Photographs (for issuing ID cards)

Sensitive Information

Some personal information we collect may include 'sensitive information' like information relating to a student's health, racial or ethnic origin, etc. Sensitive information will only be used or disclosed for the primary purpose for which it was collected or a directly related secondary purpose, unless you agree otherwise, or where certain other limited circumstances apply (for example, where required by law).

Indirect collection of personal information

We may also collect your personal information through an education or migration agent acting on your behalf.

In order to manage complaints and grievances, we may collect personal information (including sensitive information) about you indirectly from publicly available sources or from third parties such as:

- a) your authorised agent/representative, if applicable
- b) applicants, complainants, respondents to a complaint
- c) employers or work placement hosts and their representatives where applicable.

We also collect personal information from publicly available sources for marketing purposes.

Use and Disclosure of Personal Information

SERO may use and disclose your personal information for the primary purpose for which it was collected, for reasonably expected secondary purposes, and in other circumstances, authorised by the Privacy Act. In general, we use and disclose your personal information for the following purposes only:

- to conduct our business as a registered training organisation
- to provide and market our services to prospective and current students
- to communicate with you and your nominated agent, if applicable
- to comply with our legal obligations.

We may disclose your personal information to other members of SERO, other companies or individuals who assist us in providing education and/or support services or who perform functions on our behalf (such as education agents, accommodation service providers, partner institutions) regulatory authorities, and anyone else to whom you authorise us to disclose it. We will take reasonable steps to ensure that anyone to whom we disclose your personal information respects the confidentiality of the information and abides by the NPPs or equivalent privacy law.

We are required by law to provide data, which includes personal information, including sensitive information, to government departments and agencies at a State and Federal level. For example, we are required to provide data to the National Centre for Vocational Education Research who administers the AVETMISS data collection in accordance with National VET Provider Collection and the Data Provision Requirements 2012.

We are also required to confirm and verify student enrolment and attendance and participation information to the relevant Federal and State government departments, where government funding, subsidies or loans may be in place.

Sensitive information is disclosed only for the purposes for which it was given to us, or for purposes deemed to be

reasonable or expected or agreed to by you.

We may use testimonials, photographs of training and support services and other similar marketing materials for the purposes of marketing and promotion. We seek your approval for using such marketing images and materials via our Enrolment Form. You may opt to not give us permission by sending us an email requesting that your photographs and testimonials be removed from any public domain.

SERO generally does not disclose information to overseas person/s or entities, except to the student's nominated agent / representative overseas. Where personal information is sent overseas for sound business reasons, SERO will ensure that the overseas entity / person receiving the information has a binding contractual arrangement that requires it to use the information in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles

If you make a complaint or application of appeal, a copy of the relevant information will be made available to the respondent to enable a meaningful response. If you elect to make partial information available to the respondent, it may impact on our ability to resolve the matter in a fair and equitable manner.

We may disclose personal information to an external review body, the legal courts or such entities, if a complainant, applicant or respondent has made a decision to use an external dispute resolution body, such as the Commonwealth Ombudsman or the Overseas Students Ombudsman.

Due to the nature of the services provided, it is difficult to allow you to deal with us anonymously, except in cases where you are seeking general information about SERO or its services. In most other cases, we may require you to reveal your personal details in order to provide you with personalised training and support services relevant to your enrolment at SER

Access to Personal Information

SERO endeavours to ensure that the personal information it holds is accurate, complete and up-to-date. Personal information is stored electronically in a consistent format and is updated as soon as errors are noted or the information has changed.

Students are required to update their personal information as soon as practicable, and also check the accuracy of their information prior to the issuance of certification and testamurs.

Subject to the exceptions set out in the Privacy Act, we will provide access to personal information directly to the person whose information is held by us.

Under the Privacy Act (Australian Privacy Principles 12 and 13) you may access your personal information or request a change / correction to your personal information held by us. You will be required to complete a Student Update Details Form and verify your identity in order to enable us to allow you access to your information or to change your personal information. Unless required by law, we will modify your personal information. In exceptional circumstances where we make a decision to not modify your personal information, we will provide written reasons for our decision.

Management of Personal Information

In accordance with the Privacy Act, we take reasonable steps to protect the security of your personal information. This includes protecting the information from misuse or loss and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure, for example, by the use of physical security and restricted access to electronic records. Your personal information is stored in hard copy files and electronically on our password protected student data management system and third party student management System (LMS).

As a registered training organisation, we are required to retain your personal information, copies of any qualifications, Statements of Attainment and competency outcomes from assessed AQF qualifications and Accredited Courses for a period of 30 years. If we do not require your personal information for a permitted purpose under the NPPs, we will take reasonable steps to destroy it as soon as practicable.

As per our Complaints and Grievance Policy, we will retain records of any complaints and their outcomes on the relevant student file and in a central location for the purposes of compliance and continuous improvement.

8. COURSE CREDIT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Credit Transfer

Credit Transfer is the process that provides a student with credit for previous formal training that is equivalent to the course the student is about to commence. Applications for Credit Transfer must be made prior to the start of study of the course. If the application is successful and results in a shorter course duration, SERO Institute may amend and reissue a CoE. Evidence that can be used to support an application for course credit can include:

- Transcripts from other VET providers (including for short courses where the courses have been assessed)
- Units completed under AQF.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

RPL is a process that provides a student with credit for formal and non-formal training as well as life/work experience. Applications for RPL must be made prior to the start of study of the course. If the application is successful and results in a shorter course duration, SERO Institute may amend and reissue a CoE. Evidence that can be used to support an application for course credit can include:

- A detailed resume
- Letters from employers
- An interview with the Assessor
- Work skills or knowledge
- Paid or unpaid work experience
- Life experience
- Community work experience

Course credit will be granted if the student can:

- Provide sufficient evidence of relevant prior learning or experience
- Demonstrate the competency/competencies required for the course
- Present valid results of assessment or qualification

Course credit will not be granted if the student:

- Cannot provide sufficient evidence
- Is unable to demonstrate the competency/competencies required for the course. (Further information can be found at - <https://training.qld.gov.au/training/recognition/rpl>)

Procedure

- Students wishing to apply for course credit must complete a Course Credit Application Form and attach any supporting documentation.
- The completed form and supporting documentation must be forwarded to SERO Institute for assessment.
- The trainer may contact the student to request further evidence or to ask the student to attend an interview to gather further information.
- SERO Institute will notify the student of the outcome of the application, in writing, as soon as possible after the application and all relevant documentation has been received.
- Successful applications may lead to a reduction in course duration and SERO Institute may issue a new CoE.
- If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of their application, they may access
 - the International Student's Appeals process.

9. ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

SERO Institute encourages students to make use of these resources for the purpose of their education and training. They are not to be used for purposes other than course requirements.

SERO Institute reserves the right to manage the misuse of computing and electronic resources including, but not limited to:

- Moderating access to internet and intranet services, including filtering of websites and blocking selected non-educational and training websites.
- Monitoring and recording all usage of its computer networks, including internet and intranet services.
- Accessing student email accounts where it is considered that they may have been misuse of the email system.
- Taking disciplinary action when breaches of this clause occur.

Unacceptable use includes:

- Infringement of privacy of staff, students or other persons
- Sexual harassment of staff, students or other persons
- Discrimination of staff, students or other persons
- Exposing the organisation to legal liability
- Copyright infringement (liability)
- Introduction of a computer virus
- Mass distribution of SPAM
- Threat to security of the resource, staff, students, other persons or the organisation
- Illegal use (child pornography, racial or religious criticism, stalking, blackmailing)
- Offensive or inappropriate material (pornographic, racist, abusive, sexist, obscene, discriminatory, offensive, threatening, etc)

A breach of this policy is a serious matter and disciplinary action will be assessed on an individual basis. Disciplinary action can include warnings, suspension, cancellation of enrolment or in cases that breach the criminal law, referring the student to the police for criminal charges.

10. UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE STUDENTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Purpose

To establish principles and processes for SERO Institute's provision of appropriate accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements for international students who are under the age of 18 and deemed as either of the options listed below. It seeks to ensure compliance with the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000, Standard 5 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 0018 and National Standards — Needs of younger ELICOS students.

This policy applies to international students seeking to study at SERO Institute before turning 18. It sets out the standards, management requirements, support and welfare arrangements that SERO Institute follows and enforces when admitting international students under the age of 18.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy:

- a) Course commencement - means the first day of the first teaching Period.
- b) Nominated Welfare Period - means the nominated dates between which SERO Institute has agreed in writing to assume responsibility for a student under the age of 18 who has neither a parent nor a suitable relative in Australia to care for him or her, as marked on the student's Under 18 Student Welfare Letter.
- c) Registered Course - means a course of education or training provided by SERO Institute, for the ESOS Act 2000 and is registered on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS).
- d) Student - means an international student under the age of 18 years old who is studying at SERO Institute.
- e) Study Period- a session so designated.

Options

Option 1

The student will live and be cared for (until the end date on the CoE or the day of the students 18th birthday with a parent/ guardian or suitable relative who is over the age of 21 and of good character.

This arrangement must be approved by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) and will not require a confirmation of appropriate accommodation and welfare (CAAW) letter from SERO Institute.

Declaration by the parent/ guardian or suitable relative.

Option 2

The student will not be cared for while in Australia by a parent, guardian or suitable nominated relative. The student organises accommodation with the Australian Homestay Network and guardianship arrangements with either Professional Student Care Australia or the International Student Alliance Student Care & Welfare Services. The student is responsible for any fees and costs associated with these arrangements.

This option will require SERO Institute to provide a CAAW letter to the Department of Home Affairs as part of your visa application (see details below).

Policy Statement

SERO Institute admits international students under the age of 18 where:

- admission is compliant with Standard 5 of the National Code 2018;
- The student lives with a parent/ guardian or suitable relative of good character over the age of 21;
- Appropriate accommodation and welfare arrangements are in place prior to applying for a student visa;
- The arrangements are approved by the Department of Home Affairs;
- The arrangements are in place for the duration of the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) plus 7 days or until the student turns 18.

SERO Institute shall consider, on a case-by-case basis, accepting responsibility for the accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements for students that are under the age of 18. As per the Migration Regulations 1994, when students who are under the age of 18 years old make visa applications to study in Australia they must demonstrate:

- a) that they will be accompanied by:
 - i. a parent; or
 - ii. legal Guardian; or
 - iii. a suitable relative; or
- b) that their education provider has arrangements in place for their accommodation, support and general welfare for the period of the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) plus seven days after the end date of the CoE.

For the purposes of this policy:

- a) a student may reside in Australia with a parent or legal Guardian who travels to Australia to provide welfare for the student for the duration of their study. This must be indicated on the student's visa application;
- b) a student may reside in Australia with a suitable relative over 21 years of age who is approved by the student's parents or legal Guardians. This relative must be nominated as the student's guardian to the Department of Home Affairs on the appropriate form accompanying the application for a student visa. The relative should be:
 - i. a grandparent, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew or a step-grandparent, step-brother, step-sister, step- aunt, step-uncle, step-niece or step-nephew; and
 - ii. be of good character;
- c) a student may also reside in Australia if their parents approve of SERO Institute being responsible for their accommodation, support, and general welfare arrangements.

If SERO Institute wishes to enrol international students under the age of 18 that are already in Australia, it shall inform the prospective students during the recruitment phase that they are required to have welfare arrangements in place at the time that they lodge their student visa application.

If a student is undertaking a package of courses, the student must ensure that he or she has adequate welfare arrangements in place during any gap period between courses.

Support Services for Students under the age of 18

Students under the age of 18 have access to the Student Support Services outlined in **Section 5** of this handbook. Your student support officer is identified for all states in this section. The Support Officer (relevant to your state) will be assigned to you at enrolment. The support provided will be:

- You will be required to fortnightly meetings with your Support Officer where they can offer academic and personal support. Even if you don't need this support, your Support Officer will still meet with you to ensure your safety and wellbeing needs are being met.

- You must contact the Support Officer if you are sick or absent from any scheduled classes. If you do not contact your Support Officer, the Support Officer will make all attempts to contact you to ensure your safety
- You will be provided with your Support Officer's out of hours emergency contact number

Application for Welfare Arrangements Provided by a Parent/Guardian or Suitable Relative

At the time of issuing an offer to an international applicant who will be under the age of 18 when they commence their studies, SERO Institute will forward the applicant the International Student Under 18 Agreement Form.

The student and their parent/guardian or suitable relative will be required to complete the form and return it at the time of accepting their offer.

The parent/guardian or suitable relative will nominate on this form where the student will be residing. The Department of Home Affairs will approve the welfare and accommodation arrangements and SERO Institute is not required to issue a CAAW letter with the CoE.

On receipt of the completed agreement, SERO Institute will record the parent/guardian or suitable relative's name, home address, email address and contact phone number on student profile within the Student Management System. Where the student will be residing with a parent/guardian or suitable relative, SERO Institute will proceed with finalising the student's acceptance into their desired course.

Application for Accommodation and Welfare Arrangements Provided by SERO Institute

A student who will be under 18 at course commencement and will not be staying with a parent/ guardian or suitable relative while in Australia must provide SERO Institute with a written request (which has been approved by their parents / guardian, or suitable relative in writing), for SERO Institute to accept responsibility for the student's accommodation, support and welfare arrangements until they reach the age of 18.

Requests to SERO Institute to approve accommodation and welfare arrangements will be considered by the Support Officer who will respond in writing to the student advising whether the request has been successful or not.

SERO Institute will inspect the accommodation prior to the accommodation being approved, and at least every six months thereafter. SERO Institute charges a \$200 inspection fee to students for each inspection conducted. These inspections are required as a means of SERO Institute verifying that the student's accommodation is appropriate to the student's age and needs, as required by the National Code.

The student's parents shall sign the acceptance of SERO Institute's Guardianship form which is attached to the letter provided to the student, to acknowledge acceptance of the conditions required by SERO Institute in accepting responsibility for the student's welfare.

SERO Institute must ensure that when SERO Institute staff raise a CoE on PRISMS for a student for whom SERO Institute has accepted responsibility for accommodation and welfare arrangements, that they also notify DHA of SERO Institute's role by raising a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation/Welfare Arrangements (CAAW) letter.

The CAAW must specify start and end dates of the accommodation and welfare arrangements. The student cannot enter Australia on their student visa until the welfare start date has been reached and this date must be carefully matched to orientation commencement and the time taken to travel from the home country.

The end date of the welfare arrangements will normally be advised as 7 days after the end date of the CoE, or when the student has reached their 18th birthday if that is earlier.

Homestay Accommodation

Where SERO Institute agrees to accept responsibility for approving a student's welfare arrangements it will require the student to stay in SERO Institute's approved homestay accommodation. SERO Institute must ensure:

- a. the good character of the homestay providers by obtaining working with children checks, personal interviews and verifying references;

-
- b. a good standard of homestay accommodation suitable for students, through home inspections undertaken by the Support Officer responsible for students' homestay;
 - c. an appropriate cross-cultural and student welfare focused orientation provided to homestay providers by the Support Officer; and
 - d. the maintenance of processes to monitor and respond to student wellbeing in the homestay placements arranged by SERO Institute, including regular monitoring visits to homestay providers, newsletters, social functions and training activities for homestay providers.

Students will also be required to meet with their Support Officer as often as he or she requires of the student, but no less frequently than each fortnight.

Students must live in SERO Institute approved homestay accommodation until 18 years of age and not change that accommodation unless written agreement is obtained from the parent/ guardian or suitable resident.

The student must not spend a night away from the approved homestay address or undertake any travel that would require an overnight absence from the homestay address without first obtaining their Support Officer's written approval.

SERO Institute will require the student to maintain a high standard of personal and social behaviour throughout the homestay period, to conduct themselves responsibly, to refrain from risk taking behaviour and to devote themselves properly to their studies.

Refusal to obey an instruction from the homestay provider or the Support Officer to address deficiencies in the aspects of behaviour and personal conduct referred to in the above clause will provide grounds for SERO Institute to advise DHA that it has withdrawn its support for the accommodation and welfare arrangements. This may have implications for the student's visa.

SERO Institute must also advise DHA as soon as possible using the specified PRISMS pro forma letter, in the event that the under-18 year old student has changed his or her living arrangements or where SERO Institute no longer approves of the arrangements for the student.

SERO Institute may approve requests from students for alternative accommodation or welfare arrangements other than SERO Institute's approved homestay where:

- a. the student's parents or Guardian approve in writing of the alternative arrangements;
- b. SERO Institute is satisfied as to the good character of the adult(s) who are to be assigned guardianship of the student;
- c. the accommodation has been inspected by the Support Officer and found to be suitable;
- d. it is satisfied that the arrangements will provide accommodation and welfare arrangements at least equivalent to what could be obtained through a SERO Institute's approved homestay arrangement; and
- e. the arrangement is secure and likely to last until the student completes their course, or turns 18.

Changes to Student Welfare Arrangements Previously Agreed by SERO Institute

A student is not permitted to change their agreed accommodation or welfare arrangements unless first approved by their Support Officer.

Failure to comply with the above clause will be considered grounds for SERO Institute to notify DHA of its 'withdrawal of approval of accommodation and welfare arrangements' which may have implications for the student's visa.

DHA will be notified when the student changes accommodation and welfare arrangements with SERO Institute's approval.

If a student refuses to maintain SERO Institute's approved care arrangements, SERO Institute will notify DHA using the Non-Approval of Appropriate Accommodation/Welfare Arrangements Letter in PRISMS which is likely to result in the cancellation of the student's visa.

If a student has gone missing from the approved accommodation and cannot be contacted SERO Institute will:

- a) implement its documented Critical Incident Policy; and
- b) if after a reasonable period the student has not been found, SERO Institute shall report the student's breach of visa condition to DHA, which is likely to result in the cancellation of the student's visa.

Non Homestay Overnight Accommodation

Under 18 students who wish to stay overnight at an address other than their approved SERO Institute homestay address, must submit an International Under 18 Overnight Accommodation Consent Form to administration, which has been signed by their homestay parent, and parent/ guardian approving such accommodation. This form must also be approved by the Support Officer.

Transfer Provider Institution

An under 18 student seeking to transfer to another CRICOS registered provider must complete the Letter of Release Request Form and obtain parental/ guardian approval and the approval of the other institution provider if they are taking responsibility for the student's accommodation, welfare and support arrangements. If the student is sponsored, the sponsor must also provide their written approval.

Internal Campus Transfers

Internal campus transfer requests are subject to enrolment availability and will only be considered during a teaching period if special circumstances apply. Under 18 students wishing to transfer their studies to another SERO campus must gain the consent of their parent/guardian, or suitable relative before applying. Both the student and parent/guardian, or suitable relative must complete and submit the Campus Transfer Form at least 2 weeks prior to the date by which the transfer request is to take effect. Should you have any questions please speak directly to your Support Officer to discuss your concerns.

Termination Suspension or Cancellation

Where SERO Institute terminates, suspends or cancels the enrolment of a student under the age of 18, SERO Institute will continue to check suitability of care arrangements until:

- a) the Nominated Welfare Period expires;
- b) the student turns 18 years old;
- c) the student is accepted by another registered provider who is willing to take on responsibility for approving the care arrangements;
- d) the student leaves Australia or other suitable arrangements are made (e.g. parent or other suitable relative takes ongoing responsibility for the student's accommodation and welfare); or

- e) events have occurred that make it impossible for the provider to continue to approve the arrangements for the student.

Withdrawal of SERO Institutes Approval

All reasonable efforts will be made by SERO Institute to assist under 18 students with difficulties impacting their welfare arrangements.

SERO Institutes approval for accommodation, welfare and support will be withdrawn where SERO Institute deems one or more of the following grounds have been met:

- a) a student refuses to observe reasonable standards of behaviour as outlined in the Student Handbook.
- b) the student refuses to maintain SERO Institute's approved homestay arrangements;
- c) the student stays overnight at an address other than the approved homestay address, without parental/legal guardian and SERO Institute's approval;
- d) the student's enrolment is cancelled by SERO Institute.

Students will be notified in writing of the grounds for intended withdrawal of SERO Institute supported welfare arrangements by the Academic Manager. A copy will be forwarded to the student's parent/ guardian or suitable relative.

The student has a right to apply for an appeal for the decision to withdraw SERO Institute's approval for accommodation within 10 working days of notification of the decision. The application for review is to be made using the Review of a Decision form in accordance with SERO Institute's Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures. The decision of the appeal is final.

If the review outcome is unsuccessful, or the application for review is not received within the time duration specified in the above, the student's parent/guardian or suitable relative will be notified that SERO Institute is withdrawing approval for accommodation, support and welfare arrangements. Alternative welfare arrangements for the student in accordance with the above will be requested.

Where the ground for SERO Institute's withdrawal of support is due to the student refusing to maintain SERO Institute's homestay arrangements, SERO Institute will complete the Non Approval of Appropriate Accommodation/Welfare Arrangements letter on PRISMS. Provision of this letter signifies a breach of student visa condition and is likely to result in visa cancellation.

Where the parent/guardian or suitable relative has provided written confirmation that they will be accepting responsibility for the student, the PRISMS Approval to Change Accommodation/Welfare Arrangements letter will be completed.

APPENDIX A: Study Periods - VET Courses Monitored for Academic Progression

Course	Duration (Wks)	# Units	10% # Weeks	10% Behind Less than # Unit/s	20% # Weeks	20% Behind Less Than # Unit/s	30% # Weeks	30% Behind Less Than # Unit/s
BUSINESS								
Certificate I in Business	16	6	2	1	4	2	5	2
Certificate II in Business	24	12	3	2	5	3	8	4
Certificate III in Business	30	12	3	2	6	3	9	4
Certificate III in Business Administration	30	13	3	2	6	3	9	4
Certificate IV in Business	34	10	4	1	7	2	11	3
Diploma of Business	54	8	6	1	11	2	17	3
Diploma of Business Administration	54	8	6	1	11	2	17	3
Diploma of Leadership and Management	74	12	8	2	15	3	23	4
Advanced Diploma of Business	85	8	9	1	17	2	26	3
COMMERCIAL COOKERY								
Certificate III in Commercial Cookery	61	25	7	3	13	5	19	8
Certificate IV in Commercial Cookery WEP	92	33	10	4	19	7	28	10
Certificate IV in Commercial Cookery ACP	63	33	7	4	13	7	19	10
Diploma of Hospitality Management ACP	45	8	5	1	9	2	14	3
HOSPITALITY								
Certificate III in Hospitality	39	15	4	2	8	3	12	5
Certificate IV in Hospitality	52	21	6	3	11	5	16	7
Diploma of Hospitality Management	71	28	8	3	15	6	22	9
Advanced Diploma of Hospitality Management	104	33	11	3	21	6	32	9
FOUNDATION SKILLS								
Certificate I in Access to Vocational Pathways	34	11	4	2	7	3	11	4
Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways	34	14	4	2	7	3	11	5
SPORT DEVELOPMENT								
Diploma of Sport Development	86	20	9	2	18	4	27	8

APPENDIX B: Rental Accommodation

Students over 18 years may wish to consider renting instead of living in homestay as another accommodation option. In Australia, it is common for university students to live in 'share houses/units', where they have their own bedroom, but share other facilities in the house such as the kitchen, laundry, bathroom etc. Share houses are a cost effective way of living independently and help foster relationships with other students while you are studying in Brisbane. This fact sheet will outline some basic guidelines on approaching and maintaining your rental accommodation.

Step 1: Before you arrive in Australia

Think about your needs and preferences in a rental property – for example, location, public transport access, roommates, costs, lifestyle options etc. It is very difficult to make an informed decision on these factors without seeing the rental houses themselves, so make sure you spend a few days acquainting yourself with the area in the city before you finalise any paperwork.

Step 2: When you arrive in Australia

Contact a local real estate agent and arrange an appointment to inspect properties. You must check the condition of the property including bedrooms, heating and cooling facilities, security, rent arrears etc. A real estate agent will typically require you to fill out a *tenancy application form* and pay a holding deposit. Beware: these application forms can be legally binding! This means you will lose your holding deposit and may potentially have to pay rent at the property (until they find alternative tenants) if you change your mind on a successful application.

Step 3: Securing your tenancy

When the *lessor* informs you that your application has been successful, you will be required to carry out three tasks before you move in:

1. Sign your *Lease Tenancy Agreement*
2. Pay your *bond money*
3. Complete an *entry condition report*

Step 4: During your tenancy

As the lessee, you are expected to carry out several duties for the duration of your lease agreement. These include keeping rent payments up-to-date, maintaining the property in the same condition as when you rented it (this includes the surrounding grounds/gardens), pay for damage caused by you or your guests and seek written permission before amending any terms in the tenancy agreement (e.g. changing roommates) or permanently altering the property in any way. As a co-tenant, *joint and several liability* applies to these circumstances.

Step 5: Ending your tenancy

It is very difficult to break your lease agreement and end your tenancy before the specified date. If you want to leave your current rental accommodation on the last day of your agreement, a pre-determined notice period and a completed *Notice of Intention to Leave* form is required.

RENTAL ACCOMMODATION – TERMS

Tenancy Application Form – this form needs to be completed before you start looking for rental accommodation. This form requires general contact information and details of employment and helps the lessor decide on successful applicants.

Lessor/Lessee – A Lessor is the person who legally owns the property. The Lessee is the party who rents the property (i.e. the student)

Lease Tenancy Agreement – The primary, legal document between the lessor and lessee that outlines all terms and conditions of the tenancy.

Bond Money – Generally four weeks worth of rent, the bond must be paid by the lessee upon signing the lease tenancy agreement in order to provide financial collateral in the event that the terms and conditions of the contract are not followed.

Entry Condition Report – Lessees are required to document the exact condition of the rental property upon moving in. When your tenancy comes to an end, the lessor will compare an exit report with the entry condition report to determine the amount of bond refundable.

Joint and Several Liability – This law only applies to co-tenants and says that responsibility for a property is held by both individuals and as a group. That is, all co-tenants as a group will be responsible for property damage (despite who caused it). Additionally, if co-tenants disappear, the remaining individual will be held responsible for all rent payments.

Notice of Intention to Leave Form – If you are intending to leave your rental property, this form must be completed and given to the lessor with sufficient notice.

DISPUTES

If there are any problems with the property or tenancy, contact your lessor about the problem and an agreement is likely to be quickly reached. However, if disputes continue, there are two bodies that you can contact for further advice.

Queensland:

The Residential Tenancies Authority (www.rta.qld.gov.au)

The Tenant's Union of Queensland (www.tuq.org.au)

Western Australia:

The Government of Western Australia - Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety

(<https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/consumer-protection/renting-home>)

TENANCY WA (<http://www.tenancywa.org.au/>)

South Australia

Government of South Australia - SA.GOV.AU (<https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/housing/renting-and-letting>)

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

There are several real-estate agents situated in the suburbs near SERO Institute that can help you get started in securing your tenancy. The best option is to visit them in person and discuss your needs with them. Start is by exploring www.realestate.com.au or www.flatmates.com.au