

Summary Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students

Introduction

When students from other countries come to study in New Zealand, it is important that those students are well informed, safe, and properly cared for.

New Zealand educational providers have an important responsibility for international students' welfare.

This pamphlet provides an overview of the "Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students" (the Code), and provides a procedure that students can follow if they have concerns about their treatment by a New Zealand educational provider or agent of a provider.

What is the Code?

The Code is a document that provides a framework for service delivery by educational providers and their agents to international students. The Code sets out the minimum standards of advice and care that are expected of educational providers with respect to international students. The Code applies to pastoral care and provision of information only, and not to academic standards.

Who does the Code apply to?

The Code applies to all education providers in New Zealand with international students enrolled. The Code is mandatory to these providers and must be signed by them.

What is an "international student"?

An "international student" is a foreign student studying in New Zealand.

How can I get a copy of the Code?

You can request a copy of the Code from your New Zealand education provider. The Code is also available online from www.minedu.govt.nz/goto/international.

How do I know if an education provider has signed the Code?

The New Zealand Ministry of Education maintains a register of all signatories to the Code. This is available online from www.minedu.govt.nz/goto/international. If the education provider that you are seeking to enrol with is not a signatory to the Code, you will not be granted a permit from the New Zealand Immigration Service and you will not be able to study at that institution.

What do I do if something goes wrong?

If you have concerns about your treatment by your education provider or by an agent of the provider, the first thing you must do is contact the principal, the international student director, or another person who has been identified to you as someone that you can approach about complaints at your institution. The Code requires all institutions to have fair and equitable internal grievance procedures for students and you need to go through these internal processes before you can take the complaint any further.

If your concerns are not resolved by the internal grievance procedures, you can contact the International Education Appeal Authority (IEAA).

What is the International Education Appeal Authority (IEAA)?

The IEAA is an independent body established to deal with complaints from international students about pastoral care aspects of advice and services received from their education provider or the provider's agents. The IEAA enforces the standards in the Code of Practice.

How can I contact the IEAA?

You can write to the IEAA at:

International Education Appeal Authority (IEAA)

Tribunals Unit

Private Bag 32-001

Panama Street

Wellington 6146

Email: ieaa@justice.govt.nz

Website: www.justice.govt.nz/tribunals/international-education-appeal-authority

What will the IEAA do?

The purpose of the IEAA is to adjudicate on complaints from international students. The IEAA will investigate complaints and determine if there has been a breach of the Code. The IEAA has the power to impose sanctions on education providers who have committed a breach of the Code that is not a serious breach. These sanctions include an order for restitution, publication of the breach, and / or requiring that remedial action be undertaken.

The IEAA will refer complaints that are not about pastoral care to another regulatory body if appropriate.

The education provider will be given a reasonable time to remedy the breach. If the breach is not remedied within that time, the IEAA may refer the complaint to the Review Panel.

The IEAA can determine if it considers that a breach of the Code is a serious breach. If the breach is a serious breach, the IEAA will refer the complaint to the Review Panel.

What can the Review Panel do?

The Review Panel can remove or suspend an education provider as a signatory to the Code, meaning that the provider would be prevented from taking any more international students. Only the IEAA can refer complaints to the Review Panel.

A summary of the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students

The Code sets standards for education providers to ensure that:

- high professional standards are maintained**
- the recruitment of international students is undertaken in an ethical and responsible manner**
- information supplied to international students is comprehensive, accurate, and up-to-date**
- students are provided with information prior to entering into any commitments**
- contractual dealings with international students are conducted in an ethical and responsible manner**
- the particular needs of international students are recognized**
- international students are in safe accommodation**
- all providers have fair and equitable internal procedures for the resolution of international student grievances**

Full details of what is covered can be found in the Code itself.

The Code also establishes the IEAA and the Review Panel to receive and adjudicate on student complaints.

Code of Practice Compliance

The following information is provided by Southern Cross Language Institute to comply with the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students.

Cost of Tuition and all other course-related costs, so that there are no substantial hidden costs.

See the annual Statement of Fees which contains details of the Entrance Fee, Tuition Fees, Host Family Fees and Fee for Extras. Students at the 3 contributing high schools or their parents may request further copies of the Statement of Fees, either in English or in Japanese, from the contributing school in Japan or from the SCLI Director in NZ. Please email Koopman@xtra.co.nz

Application requirements and procedures.

Prospective applicants and their parents are encouraged to attend the “setsumeikai” (explanatory meeting) at Hikarigaoka, Sei Katarina and Sei Maria in Japan, where prospective applicants and their parents have an opportunity to meet the SCLI Principal or senior staff members. This meeting is usually held in early October each year. Interested applicants then approach the teacher in charge of the programme at their high school. If applicants are recommended by their Principal or teacher in charge, they can complete the application form, the host family matching form and the Principal or teacher in charge will complete the Recommendation form. The forms are sent to SCLI via Nippon Travel Agency in December preceding the year of enrolment. Visa, travel & medical insurance and return travel arrangements to New Zealand will be made by Nippon Travel Agency, Okazaki. The travel agent and a teacher will accompany the applicants to New Zealand in April.

Conditions of Acceptance.

All students recommended by the above mentioned schools will be accepted by SCLI, provided that the total number of applicants does not exceed 50. Should the total number of applicants exceed 50, some scaling down may take place in consultation with the 3 schools in Japan. Students attending other high schools in Japan can only be accepted by SCLI if the three contributing high schools do not have sufficient applicants.

Refund Conditions and Policy.

See annual Statement of Fees or Conditions of Enrolment, section 3, which contain all refund conditions.

English language requirements.

Applicants must have completed at least 4 years of English language study prior to commencing their year of study at SCLI. During Enrolment week students will sit an English language proficiency test. Based on the results of this test, students will be streamed into classes, so that they study with students of similar English language proficiency. The streaming is not rigid.

Information on facilities, equipment and staffing.

Facilities: 3 classrooms, 1 resource room, 2 lunchroom areas, 2 kitchens.

Equipment: television set and computer with internet access in each classroom, dvd player, library books, audio tapes and tape recorders as well as digital learning material, piano. Kitchen equipment includes stove, hot plates, microwave ovens. There is also a garden with seating and a front porch with seating.

Staffing: Director, Principal, 3 full-time teachers, 1 part-time Japanese speaking student advisor, 1 full-time school secretary/host family liaison person, 1 part-time cleaner, 1 part-time gardener/handyman.

Information on the course / qualification offered.

SCLI offers a one-year full-time Diploma Course in English as a Foreign Language. Minimum requirements for graduation with the Diploma are 2 C and 2 D grades in the Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing Skills. Students who complete the course but achieve lower grades will be awarded the Certificate of Attendance. Students who graduate with A grades in all four skills will be awarded the Diploma with Distinction.

Information on medical and travel insurance requirements.

SCLI has developed a Medical and Travel Insurance policy to ensure the safety and well-being of the students studying at SCLI and to ensure compliance with the Code of Practice. See Statement of Fees or Conditions of Enrolment, Section 8. This insurance will be organised by Nippon Travel

Agency in Japan.

Verification of policies will be undertaken on Enrolment Day. Where a student is not in possession of an appropriate and current medical and travel insurance policy SCLI undertakes to provide the student with a default policy which meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. The cost of the insurance will be met by the student.

Information and advice on the types of accommodation applicable to students.

See Conditions of Enrolment, section 4. All students live with carefully selected host families. No other forms of accommodation are acceptable. The host families are selected by SCLI. The suitability of the accommodation is assessed by SCLI before a student placement is made.

While the family is hosting a student, the hosting arrangement is closely monitored through interviews and home visits by SCLI staff. The name and address of the selected host family will be sent to the student in Japan at the end of February, which is about 6 weeks before the commencement of the course.

Students can make their homestay preferences known on the Homestay Information sheet, which all applicants complete. The cost of the Homestay is paid for in advance.

Students are entitled to accommodation in a single room with wardrobe, heating and study facilities with the use of facilities in the house. All meals are included.

Students who are not satisfied with their host family accommodation and environment may ask to be transferred to another family. In the first instance, an interview with the counsellor and the host family liaison person will be arranged, which may involve the host family as well. If it is in the student's best interests to be moved, she will be introduced to a suitable new family and have the opportunity to inspect the new family home before any decisions are made. There is no charge to students for a move to a second host family. The individual student's happiness, safety and well-being are SCLI's prime concerns in all hosting decisions. (See also Conditions of Enrolment, Sections 4 and 5.)

Details of SCLI's orientation programme and support services.

The course starts with an orientation programme, which includes, but is not limited to, explaining the school routine, minimum standards to be achieved for graduation with the SCLI diploma, exchanging Japanese Yen for NZ\$, opening a current and a savings account with a bank, using an ATM machine for withdrawing funds, budgeting advice, the Christchurch bus transport system, the Road Code as it applies to pedestrians and cyclists, finding one's way around in central Christchurch, location of banks and the post office, school rules, living with a NZ host family, host family's expectations, making small talk to start a conversation, what to do and who to contact in case of problems, role of the counsellor, role of the host family liaison person, out-of school contacts for sporting, cultural links, out-of-school advisory services.

Grievance procedures.

See Conditions of Enrolment, Section 6.

A copy of the summary document of the Code of Practice.

Copies of this document in English and in Japanese are available from contributing schools in Japan. The summary is also available for downloading on this website. A copy is also displayed on the SCLI noticeboard.

Procedures that apply when a student is absent from school or withdraws from her course.

*** If a student is going to be absent for any reason, the host family or the student contacts the school before 9.30 am on the day of absence. If no message has been received by SCLI, the host family will be contacted. SCLI needs to know at all times where the student is in order to ensure her safety and well-being.**

*** When a student withdraws voluntarily and permanently from her course, the NZ Immigration Service will be notified. This would normally result in the student returning to Japan. See Conditions of Enrolment, Section 3.**

*** If a student has been absent continuously for 10 school days, and no valid reason has been provided, tuition will be terminated. In such a case, after consultation with her school and parents in Japan, the NZ Immigration Service will be notified and the student is likely to be returned to Japan. See Conditions of Enrolment, Section 3. (It is extremely rare at SCLI for a student to withdraw from her course or for tuition to be terminated.)**

Circumstances in which SCLI may terminate tuition.

Although SCLI gives a guarantee that it will not voluntarily end a one-year course prematurely, a course closure could happen if the New Zealand Qualifications Authority were to decide that SCLI is no longer capable of delivering the course in accordance with the Qualifications Authority Policy. Cancellation of our registration by NZQA, withdrawal of our accreditation or course approval by NZQA, as well as the appointment of a company liquidator or being placed in statutory management will lead to closure of our one-year course. (SCLI has a long and proven track history and premature closure of our one-year course is extremely unlikely.)

Details of SCLI's fee protection arrangements.

The amount of Fees protected at any time is the unexpired portion of all fees paid by students, including host family fees.

Type of Fee Protection:

Standard Trust Account with Mr Grant Rae, Chartered Accountant, 4 Leslie Hills Drive, PO Box 8117, Riccarton, Christchurch. Phone (03) 343 3692

Relevant people or organisations to contact in case the SCLI one-year course closes prematurely:

Adviser, Student Fee Protection, New Zealand Qualifications Authority, PO Box 160, Wellington 6015. Telephone (04) 802 3000.

Mr Grant Rae, Chartered Accountant, 4 Leslie Hills Drive, PO Box 8117, Riccarton, Christchurch. Phone (03) 343 3692

In the case of premature closure of SCLI affected students should attend any arranged meetings so that they know what is being put in place for them.

In the case of premature closure, students should also consult the Qualifications Authority website (www.nzqa.govt.nz). This website has detailed information about the student fee protection policy, the standard accountant trust and a section on frequently asked questions. These documents are also available in printed form upon request from the Director of SCLI.

The Fee Protection Arrangements will be triggered by a Course Closure Event.

Cancellation of our registration by NZQA, withdrawal of our accreditation or course approval by NZQA, as well as the appointment of a company liquidator or being placed in statutory management will lead to closure of our one-year course. SCLI being affected by a premature closure is extremely unlikely.

Support Services available in Christchurch:

As well as guidance, support and counseling provided by SCLI, students may wish to contact other agencies. Here is a list of some support services:

Citizens Advice Bureau: This organisation provides free advice, information and support on any subject. Telephone 0800 367 222

Community Law Centre: This organisation provides free legal advice. 281 Madras Street, Telephone 366 6631

Christchurch Library: You can borrow books, magazines, videos, CDs and cassettes. They also have information about many organisations in Christchurch – sports, hobbies, cultural groups and tuition in many subjects and skills. Telephone 379 6914 or go to the information desk.

Consular Office of Japan: 764 Colombo Street, at the Armagh Street corner opposite the National Bank. Telephone 366 5680

Police: In emergencies dial 111. This is the general emergency number. If it is not an emergency you can go to the Police Station, corner Hereford Street & Cambridge Terrace. Telephone 363 7400

Student Welfare and Safety Policy

Rationale

The safety of international students is a critical issue given that SCLI has ultimate responsibility for the student's welfare in the absence of parents.

Guidelines

1. To ensure the well-being and safety of international students at all times, both within the school and when with their host families. Indicators for concern could include –

- a) non-performance at school**
- b) failure to attend school regularly**
- c) a change in normal patterns of behaviour**

2. Host Families acting in the place of parents and are expected to –

- a) notify the school immediately when their student is absent from school**
- b) notify the host family liaison person urgently if a student's behaviour causes concern**

Issues for concern could include

- failure to return home at the agreed time**
- repeated infringement of homestay rules**
- failure to abide by the Conditions of Enrolment, Section 4.0**
- failure to abide by the rules in the Guide for Students and Host Families**

School Response

1. Where a student's behaviour, safety and well-being, either at school or with the Homestay family causes concern the school will -

- follow the school's Regulations, as explained in Conditions of Enrolment, Section 5.0**
- bring the matter to the attention of the student's parents in Japan and also notify her school in Japan.**

Initially the student will be interviewed by the Principal and/or Counsellor who may use a range of intervention strategies.

