

## Accommodation and Welfare

### Care for younger students under 18 years

Seymour College is a CRICOS-registered provider which enrolls younger students under 18 years of age.

As part of registration obligations Seymour College must satisfy Commonwealth and state legislation, as well as any other regulatory requirements, relating to child welfare and protection for any overseas student enrolled who is under 18 years of age.

These obligations include ensuring that all overseas students under 18 years of age are given age- and culturally-appropriate information on:

- who to contact in emergency situations, including contact number/s of a nominated staff member, and
- how to seek assistance and report any incident or allegation involving actual or alleged sexual, physical or other abuse.

Seymour College has documented procedures relating to child welfare and safety and will implement these procedures in the event that there are any concerns for the welfare of a student under 18 years of age.

### Accommodation and care options for overseas students under 18 years

Seymour College approves the following accommodation and care options for overseas students:

1. **The student will live with a parent or relative approved by the Department of Human Affairs.**

In this case:

- The College does **not** provide a welfare letter (CAAW) via PRISMS. The student's family provides proof of relationship to Department of Human Affairs at the time of visa application for approval of these arrangements. The Department of Human Affairs must also approve any further change of welfare arrangements.
- If the adult responsible for the welfare, accommodation and other support arrangements for a student under 18 years holds a Student guardian visa subclass 590 <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/student-590>, all obligations and conditions of this visa must be met, including:
  - not leaving Australia without the nominating student unless there are compassionate and compelling circumstances and the College has first approved alternative welfare and accommodation arrangements for the student for the adult's period of absence, and
  - advising the Department of Human Affairs of any change of address, passport or other changes of circumstances.

Seymour College requires holders of Student Guardian Visas to:

- maintain Overseas Visitor Health Cover for themselves and any dependent children living with them in Australia
- immediately advise the College of any change to address or contact details
- immediately advise the College if there are any compassionate or compelling reasons to travel overseas or not be at home for an extended period of time to care for the student.
- If there is a valid reason for travelling overseas, and the College is able to approve alternative accommodation and care arrangements for the

student for the period of student guardian visa holder's absence, the College will provide documentation approving temporary care arrangements for the student to the student's guardian and for the Department of Human Affairs via PRISMS.

- If there is not a valid reason for travelling overseas, or if the College is not able to approve alternative accommodation and care arrangements for the student for the period of student guardian visa holder's absence, the student will need to travel overseas with the holder of the student guardian visa. In this case, the College will advise if compulsory attendance requirements will or will not be affected by the student's absence.

**2. The student will live in College approved accommodation and welfare arrangements and Seymour College will generate the welfare letter (CAAW) via PRISMS to accompany the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).**

Accommodation options that may be approved by Seymour College for overseas students on a 500 visa, under 18 years of age include:

- College Boarding House
- Homestay Program operated by Australian Homestay Network.

Seymour College will maintain approval of accommodation and care arrangements until:

- The student completes the course and departs Australia
- the student turns 18 years
- any appeals process in relation to Seymour College's intentions to cancel the student's enrolment has been finalised (including suspensions, cancellations, course progress and attendance)
- the student has alternative welfare arrangements approved by another registered provider
- a parent or nominated relative approved by the Department of Human Affairs assumes care of the student
- Seymour College has notified the Department of Human Affairs that it is no longer able to approve the student's welfare arrangements and has taken the required action after not being able to contact the student.

Any accommodation, welfare and other support arrangements for the student must be approved by Seymour College, including arrangements provided by third parties.

Accommodation and care arrangements are checked prior to approval and at least every six months thereafter to ensure they are appropriate to the student's age and needs.

Any adults involved in or providing accommodation and welfare arrangements to the student have an appropriate Working With Children check.

Any changes to approved arrangements must also be approved by the College.

If a student cannot be located and the College has concerns for her welfare, the College will contact the student's parents / legal guardian and notify the police and any other relevant authorities.

If a student for whom the College has issued a CAAW refuses to maintain approved arrangements, the College will report this to the Department of Human Affairs and advise the student to contact the Department of Human Affairs to ensure visa implications are understood. (See Department of Human Affairs office addresses at: <http://www.border.gov.au/about/contact/offices-locations/australia>).

In the event of a significant or critical welfare issue involving the student, and if determined necessary by the College, a parent, legal guardian or approved relative agrees to travel to a designated location within 3 days to assume care of the student until the situation has been resolved to the College's satisfaction.

If a parent / nominated guardian wishes to assume welfare responsibility, the parent / nominated guardian must notify the College as soon as practicable of their intentions and must provide the College with written evidence of a guardian visa grant.

**1. For College vacation periods, students under 18 years of age for whom Seymour College has issued a CAAW will:**

- return home to parents, or
- continue to live in / is placed in Homestay arranged and approved by the College, or
- apply for approval to spend the vacation with relatives or a friend's family, or
- apply to attend a supervised excursion, camp, etc., if all requirements are met in order to attain College approval.

**2. Accommodation options for students 18 years and older include:**

It is a condition of enrolment that students over 18 years also maintain College approved accommodation arrangements for term time and holidays e.g.

- Student returns home to parents
- Student continues to live in / is placed in Homestay, details of which are recorded by the College
- Any private arrangements requested by a parent must be approved by the College are subject to the collection of information including the requirement of Working With Children checks, passport information and mobile phone contacts.
- If the College is not satisfied with the information supplied by the student an application for leave maybe denied.

**3. Homestay / private accommodation arrangements at Seymour College:**

The Homestay approved by Seymour College meets legislative requirements for child protection as well as Standard 5 of the 2018 National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students.

These include;

- Continuous dates for approved welfare arrangements
- Documented procedures for checking suitability of accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements before a student is placed in an approved arrangement, and at least every six months thereafter, covering
  - Guidelines for selecting, screening and monitoring each family and ensuring the family can provide age appropriate care and facilities for the duration of the student's enrolment at the College

- Criteria about accommodation services to be provided, and contract for arrangements about providing accommodation services
- Orientation program for families new to provision of homestay services
- Compliant Homestay risk management strategy, reviewed annually, undertaken by College / operator of the homestay program
- Provide a report on the family, including all the people in the family, their ages, language spoken as well as contact details which are added into the College database.

Working With Children checks are required for adults living in the homestay.

### **Termination, suspension or cancellation of enrolment**

If the College terminates, suspends or cancels the enrolment of a younger student for whom we have approved welfare, accommodation and support arrangements, the College will continue to check the suitability of arrangements for that student until:

- the student is accepted by another provider and that provider takes over responsibility for approving the student's accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements
- the student leaves Australia
- other suitable arrangements are made that satisfy the Migration Regulations, or
- the College reports to Department of Home Affairs that it can no longer approve of the arrangements for the student via PRISMS.

### **Recommending, Monitoring Assessing and Approving Accommodation Arrangements**

Seymour College encourages all overseas student to live in our Boarding House. All College staff are required to undertake Mandatory Reporting training and have current Working with Children checks. However, the College has an agreement with Australian Homestay Network (AHN) and we feel confident that their policies and procedures offer our students a safe living environment.

All students requesting Homestay will be provided information on how to register for this. Approval of host families are made by the College after a report on a potential placement is provided. See more information on Australian Homestay Network below.

### **Management of Monitoring, Assessing and Approving Accommodation Arrangements**

In order to provide a safe living environment for our students in our Boarding House, Seymour College staff will carry out the below;

1. Daily feedback on the student's welfare collated by the Boarding house staff and College staff
2. Workplace Health and Safety Audit of the Boarding House
3. Risk Management training

### **Australian Homestay Network (AHN)**

If a student and their family request a Homestay for the time the student is at College or for a short term stay during the holidays, then Enrolments will provide the family or Agent with the website link for Australian Homestay Network to arrange this.

<https://www.homestaynetwork.org/>

The College is satisfied that AHN have policies in place to manage the welfare of younger overseas students, according to Standard 5 and they report to the College on the welfare of the student on a regular basis. See Homestay Policy. The College will;

- Make follow-up calls or site visits to Homestay families or parent or a suitable nominated relative as required every 6 months.
- Homestay hosts are listed in the College database so they can be contacted as required and are kept updated on College information.
- As part of the agreement, AHN will provide the following services to Seymour College and/or Students:
  - Where a student is under the age of 18 AHN will conduct a physical inspection of the home to verify that it is appropriate the students age and needs: prior to arrival and every 6 months for the duration of the placement.
  - Evidence of the last inspection date is clearly visible on the student placement report accessible in the Homestay Management System and can be sent to the Education Provider anytime upon request.
- The College will notify AHN if a Student ceases enrolment in a program of study, is suspended by the Education Provider, or if a Student's enrolment has been cancelled;
- The College will provide relevant updates to AHN that supports mutual obligations with respect to overseas students and Students under 18 years of age;
- The College will provide up-to-date and accurate information on Students and their parents or guardians that is relevant to the provision of Services by AHN;
- Notify AHN of any concerns, disputes or problems relating to a Homestay Agreement;
- Advise AHN of any known changes to a Student's welfare or accommodation;

### **Terminating the Approval of Arrangements in Homestay**

If the College is informed by the student, reputable source or as a result from our assessments that the student is at risk, the College will immediately remove the student from the Homestay parent or a suitable nominated relative as required and into either another approved Homestay or into our Boarding House whilst investigations are made. The student's parents will be informed as soon as the issue is raised.

Should the Homestay situation be untenable, then the host family will not be recommended again.

### **Emergency management**

In times when emergency accommodation is required, the College will take every action to ensure the safety of the student. If the student is unable to reside in the College Boarding House or Homestay as it is unsafe to do so or they are requiring to self-isolate, alternative accommodation will be found by the College or parents, this may include staying with friends or family or in a hotel.

In the situation that accommodation is with friends or family or a hotel, the College will look to do the below;

- Advise the parents of the situation immediately,
- Gain a current police check for anyone over the age of 18 in the home,
- An address of the home and contact details of an adult who will be supervising the student will be added to the student's file,

- If a site visit can be conducted by the College, it will be done, or the College will use Skype or Zoom calls to view the student and their surroundings,
- Should the student need to be placed in a hotel and they are over the age of 16 years, the College will conduct twice daily welfare checks in person or electronically, to ensure that the student is safe and well,
- The student's parents will be asked to write to the College providing their permission for the student to stay with the family, homestay host or in a hotel,
- PRISMS will be updated with the contact details of the home or hotel within 24 hours,
- Records of the incident to be kept for at least two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student.

### **Critical Incident**

If the overseas student is refusing their accommodation or is missing from their accommodation or the accommodation provider becomes unable to maintain arrangements, the College should initiate the below;

1. **Activate Critical Incident Management Plan** including;
  - the action to be taken,
  - any immediate welfare arrangements in an emergency,
  - protocols for informing authorities such as the police, Immigration, the overseas student's parents, or other relevant authorities.
  - required follow-up by the College
  - records of the incident to be kept for at least two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student

2. **Contacting Overseas Student's Parents**

Seymour College will communicate with overseas student's parents on any matter relating to their personal safety and the social wellbeing of the students. This will be done via phone or email and using a translator to ensure that the information is understood.