

## Admissions Policy and Procedure

### 1. Policy Statement and Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure Study Group Australia Pty Limited (“SGA”) has open, fair and transparent processes for making decisions about the selection of students into a program (the Program) offered by SGA and that those procedures are based on the published and clearly-defined entry requirements, and that students are selected on merit, based on those entry requirements, on an individual case by case basis.

### 2. Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all intending and continuing students of a High School, Foundation<sup>1</sup>, ELICOS or Higher Education course delivered and awarded by a SGA College listed in the footer of this document and staff of these colleges.

### 3. Definitions

**Articulation** means an approved arrangement which recognises admission and/or credit into a College program of study as outlined in SGA’s *Advanced Standing and Credit Transfer Policy and Procedure*.

**Conditional Offer/ Conditional Admission** is a status of course offer or admission whereby a restriction is placed on the student’s offer or admission and remains in force until it has been deemed by SGA as having been satisfactorily addressed.

**Course** means a collection of academic subjects or units, which may or may not lead to the award of a certificate, diploma or degree.

**Department of Home Affairs (DHA)** is the Australian Government department responsible for issuance of student visa and provision of student visa services ([www.homeaffairs.gov.au](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au))

**Domestic student**, in the context of this policy, means a student who is an Australian citizen (including Australian citizens with dual citizenship), or a student who is a New Zealand citizen or a student who has Permanent Resident Status.

**Entry criteria** (may also be referred to as Admission Requirements, Selection Criteria, Admission Criteria and/or Entry Requirements) are the set of one or more, or any combination of, requirements that an applicant must satisfy for admission and enrolment in the College and their chosen course. Admission requirement(s) may include (but not be limited to): academic requirements such as completion of a relevant high school or post-secondary qualification, attainment of a minimum English language proficiency; and other requirements such as criminal record check, working with children check, completion of a screening questionnaire or other admission assessment, or readiness for study program support participation requirements.

**Discontinued Student** (can also be referred to as excluded, terminated, or cancelled) refers to a student who has had their enrolment forcibly ceased by the College or another tertiary education institution for a specified minimum or maximum period due to the decision of a panel convened to examine a matter of academic or non-academic misconduct or convened to examine the failure to meet a core requirement of a course or other serious matters.

**Head of College** is the most senior staff member for the College (or their delegate). May also be referred to as Centre Director, Principal, or Campus Director.

**International student/overseas student** means a student required to hold a student visa for study in Australia.

**National Code 2018** means the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 established under the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) to provide nationally consistent standards for the conduct of registered providers and the registration of their courses.

**Offer** means the formal invitation of admission and/or initial enrolment made to a prospective student to commence a course at the College.

**Program of study (program):** see definition for course.

**Unit** means a unit of study in a higher education course or a unit or subject in an ELICOS or Foundation course.

**Qualifications** include degrees, diplomas, certificates, professional titles and professional standing that an individual acquires through recognised study or experience. It also includes the outcomes of an assessment and validation process obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved relevant learning outcomes to given standards and/or processes the necessary competence in a specific area.

**Younger aged student** means a person under the age of 18.

#### **4. Policy Provisions**

- SGA will ensure that all applicants seeking admission are treated fairly and equitably.
- Admission procedures will be fair and transparent and admission and enrolment requirements will be course specific, based on clearly defined, consistent and equitable entry criteria used for making decisions about the selection of students.
- Students will be selected on merit, according to the published criteria, and on an individual case by case basis.
- Throughout the process of selection and admission, all applicants shall be treated courteously and expeditiously.
- Admission and enrolment requirements shall support the enabling of differing pathways for admission. These may include, but are not limited to: direct application to the College or through internal or external articulation.
- Entry criteria and application procedures are published in promotional brochures and on the SGA websites and shall not present unreasonable barriers to access.
- SGA consistently applies procedures for verifying applicants' credentials. This ensures that students entering SGA programs have an adequate basis of knowledge and skills to successfully undertake the studies proposed.
- Offers for admission apply to a specific intake and may be made on a conditional basis. If an applicant does not fulfil the condition(s), he/she may not normally enter the program without Head of College approval. These conditions may include English ability and/or achievement of an academic requirement where evidence of attainment was not available at the time of application.
- In cases where an applicant is assessed as not being eligible to enter the course of choice, a review is undertaken of alternative courses within SGA's available course scope that may be suitable for the applicant and, where possible, the applicant will be advised of any alternate course(s) they may be eligible to enter.

## **5. Procedures**

### **5.1 Pre-admission Procedures**

#### **5.1.1 Start Dates**

There are multiple start dates for each program across each calendar year. Start dates are published within the relevant brochures and on the SGA websites. Applications for each start date are processed in the order in which they are received.

#### **5.1.2 Entry Criteria**

Entry criteria and application procedures are published in SGA's brochures and on SGA's website for the information of those seeking admission. Persons seeking to enrol in course with Study Group Australia Pty Ltd are required to submit acceptable evidence that they meet the published entry criteria for their chosen course. Each application is reviewed against the published entry criteria.

#### **5.1.3 Method of contact**

During the application process, an applicant may:

- make independent contact with the SGA Admissions Centre; and/or
- if an international applicant, be assisted by an Education Agent, either onshore or offshore; and/or
- apply online; and/or
- visit an SGA campus to enrol.

Applications for admission to a course must be made on the prescribed form and lodged in the manner prescribed on the form by the applicant (usually in person, by post, fax, email or online) or their nominated agent through SGA's agent applicant portal.

Based on the information provided and subject to the application meeting the published entry requirements, a written offer of a place in the course will be made to the applicant. Acceptance of an offer of a place shall be taken to constitute acceptance by the applicant of all published regulations of the Institution (as updated from time to time) and all other terms and conditions of enrolment advised at time of offer.

#### **5.1.4 Information to be provided to applicants**

Irrespective of the contact method student, or intending overseas students, before they are enrolled will be provided with comprehensive and current information in plain English which includes:

- a. the requirements for acceptance into a program, including:
  - prerequisites for entry to the course, including the minimum level of English language proficiency; and
  - educational qualifications or work experience required;
- b. whether course credit may be applicable;
- c. information about the course, including:
  - content and duration (and holiday breaks);
  - course qualification, award or other outcomes;
  - course content;
  - modes of study for the course including compulsory online and/or work-based training, placements and other community-based learning arrangements (if/as applicable);
- d. information about the campus, including:
  - campus locations;
  - a general description of facilities, equipment and learning (including any library) resources available to students;

- e. details of any arrangements with another registered provider, person or business to provide the course or part of the course, if applicable;
- f. indicative tuition and non-tuition fees, including advice on the potential for changes to fees over the duration of a course, and SGA's cancellation and refund policies;
- g. information about the grounds on which the student's enrolment may be deferred, suspended or cancelled;
- h. any other information relevant to the student's study with the SGA College in the intended course(s) and the outcomes associated with those courses; and

additionally, for international applicants:

- i. the CRICOS course code;
- j. a description of the ESOS framework, including official Australian Government material or links to this material online; and
- k. relevant information on living in Australia, including:
  - indicative costs of living;
  - accommodation options;
  - schooling obligations and options for school-aged dependants of intending students, including that school fees may be incurred; and
  - the policy and process the registered provider has in place for approving the accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements for younger overseas students (in accordance with National Code Standard 5).

SGA will include its CRICOS registered name and registration number in all written or online admissions material that is distributed or made publicly available.

#### **5.1.5 Application for admission**

The applicant will be required to complete and submit an *Application for Admission*, stating details of the preferred program, and providing evidence of eligibility for enrolment. The completed application for admission and the supporting evidence (see below) are then reviewed against the relevant entry criteria by one of SGA's Admissions Officers (International Admissions Centre) or Registrar (or equivalent) (campus-based).

#### **5.1.6 Supporting Evidence to be provided by applicants**

The following documents must be provided by the applicant with the application form:

- verified copy of passport
- verified copies of English test result documents (IELTS, TOEFL or other internationally recognised exam consistent with the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) regulations).
- original or verified copies of academic certificates and transcripts
- any other supporting information

Important note: All documents supplied in support of an application for enrolment at SGA must be verified copies of originals or certified copies of English translations of the originals.

(Please refer below for information about verification procedures)

\*Persons eligible to certify documents are: authorised officer from the institution that originally issued the document, an Australian Education Office, authorised representative of Study Group, Public Notary or Justice of the Peace. The authorised officer must sign and print their name clearly, include the date and an official stamp or seal of the authorised officer's organisation.

Where there are doubts about a student's claimed academic credential, Study Group Australia Pty Ltd will contact the issuing institution for verification.

## 5.2 Admission Procedure

### 5.2.1 Completion and submission of application for admission

The applicant completes the Application for Admission either online or in hard copy, and submits it along with the supporting evidence related to eligibility for enrolment. Certified copies of an applicant's credentials are required.

### 5.2.2 Assessment of application

The Admissions Officer (in the case of an application being processed by the International Admissions Centre) or Registrar (or equivalent) (in the case of an application being processed at an SGA campus) assesses the application based on the published entry requirements for the Program.

This assessment of eligibility for entry must be thorough and consistent in approach, especially in relation to the English language skills of the applicant.

### 5.2.3 Methods for determining equivalency of academic qualifications

An applicant may present overseas academic qualifications at the time of application. These are assessed for equivalency consistent with Australian Government Department of Education and Training's (DET) approaches for qualification recognition and the associated Country Education Profiles (CEPs) qualifications recognition tool. For further details, refer to DET's websites at:

- <https://internationaleducation.gov.au/services-and-resources/pages/qualifications-recognition.aspx>; and/or
- <https://www.education.gov.au/international-students/get-your-overseas-qualification-or-skills-recognised-australia>.

### 5.2.4 Methods for determining authenticity of academic qualifications

International academic qualifications submitted can be authenticated by:

- original documents (i.e. award and transcript of results) being provided to the authorised representative; or
- copies of the original documents (i.e. award and transcript of results) being provided which have been either:
  - notarised by a Justice of the Peace or equivalent authority; or
  - verified as a true and correct copy of the original documents by an authorised representative of SGA.

The authorised representative must sign and print his/her name clearly, include the date, and record that the original has been sighted. If external to SGA, an official stamp or seal of the authorised officer's organisation must be added.

Should the Admissions Officer suspect that the academic document presented has been altered or fraudulently created, contact is made with the conferring institution to validate the claims of the applicant.

If the application makes reference to studies currently being undertaken and is unable therefore to present evidence of the academic entry requirements having been met, then the offer of enrolment will be conditional upon the achievement of the required academic outcome.

### 5.2.5 Access and Equity

SGA ensures course admission requirements do not present unreasonable barriers to access. SGA's admission and enrolment processes for domestic students include provision for applications for additional consideration from students who are a mature aged applicant<sup>1</sup>, have a disability or long

---

<sup>1</sup> Mature age applicant is a person 21 years of age or older who can demonstrate relevant life/work experience and skills. Life/Work skills may include organisational ability, time management skills, an enthusiasm for the field of study and commitment to achieving set goals. A wide range of work environments and other experiences may demonstrate these skills.

term medical condition<sup>2</sup>, who are of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, or have experience educational disadvantage in their prior academic performance<sup>3</sup>.

#### *Reasonable adjustment for the special needs of students who have a disability*

SGA adopts the Disability Standards for Education 2005, underpinned by the Disability Discrimination Act, 1992 which states that it is unlawful for an educational authority to discriminate against a person on the grounds of their disability. SGA will treat all students equally and with dignity. Students who have a disability will be able to enjoy the benefits of the educational experience in the same way as those without a disability.

Wherever feasible and practicable, and in consultation with the College Student Support Services staff, SGA staff will take into consideration the special needs of students who have a disability and make reasonable adjustment to the teaching and/or assessment environments.

Reasonable adjustment for students with a disability will be individualised, and granted with integrity according to negotiations with stakeholders. Reasonable adjustment will be implemented in such a way as to ensure that the interests of all parties are met, applied with care and fairness, and applied across the scope of a student's interaction with SGA.

For further details, refer to SGA's Provision of Support for Students with Disabilities Policy and Procedure and Disability Policy and Procedure.

### **5.2.6 Offer of enrolment**

If, upon completion of the admissions assessment and verification of credentials, the applicant is deemed eligible for entry to the course or program of courses then an Enrolment Offer Pack is issued to the applicant either electronically or by standard mail.

This Enrolment Offer Pack comprises:

- Letter of Offer, outlining in plain English:
  - the course or courses in which the student is to be enrolled;
  - the campus location(s) at which the course(s) will be delivered;
  - the expected course start date;
  - the expected course end date;
  - the expected course orientation date or period;
  - the offered modes of study for the course, including if applicable any compulsory online and/or work-based training, placements, and/or other community-based learning and/or collaborative research training arrangements;
  - any prerequisites necessary to enter the course or courses, including English language requirements and listing any conditions imposed on the student's enrolment;
  - all tuition fees payable by the student for the course, the periods to which those tuition fees relate and payment options (including, if an international student and permitted under the ESOS Act, that the student may choose to pay more than 50 per cent of their tuition fees before their course commences);
  - details of any non-tuition fees the student may incur, including as a result of having their study outcomes reassessed, deferral of study, fees for late payment of tuition fees, or other circumstances in which additional fees may apply;
  - offer and enrolment terms and Conditions;
  - SGA's Cancellation and Refund Policy;

---

<sup>2</sup> Individual's seeking accessibility assistance with applying for admission or their enrolment should contact the College to discuss accessibility support services.

<sup>3</sup> Educational disadvantage incurred as a result of circumstances could include: absence from school; inability to concentrate; inability to submit written work, or undertake oral or other examinations. Applicants must attach full supporting documentation including contact details of referees with appropriate professional knowledge of the special consideration case, prepared to give statements on the extent of the disadvantage and the extent to which such disadvantage was or was not compensated by the school/educational authority. Applications that do not have supporting documentation will not be assessed.

- a plain English explanation of what happens in the event of the Program not being delivered and associated course assurance arrangements, including the role of the TPS for international students;
- SGA's internal and external complaints and appeals policy and procedure;
- the Acceptance of Offer document for completion by the applicant to confirm acceptance of the offer (see *Contract of enrolment* below);
- that the student is responsible for keeping a copy of the written agreement as supplied by the registered provider, and receipts of any payments of tuition fees or non-tuition fees;
- the circumstances in which personal information about the student may be disclosed by the registered provider, the Commonwealth (including the TPS if international student), or state or territory agencies, in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988*;
- that "The written agreement, and the right to make complaints and seek appeals of decisions and action under various processes, does not affect the rights of the student to take action under the *Australian Consumer Law* if the *Australian Consumer Law* applies"; and
- details on other documents and links to supplementary information applicable to the enrolment. (*The Letter of Offer will only use links to provide supplementary material*).

The Letter of Offer for international students will also outline information relating to the ESOS Framework and include information, which is to be consistent with the requirements of the ESOS Act, in relation to refunds of tuition fees and non-tuition fees in the case of student default and provider default set out at National Code 2018 at Standards 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6.

#### **5.2.7 Contract of enrolment**

The Letter of Offer, signed by SGA, with the Acceptance of Offer, signed by the Applicant (and his/her parent or guardian if the applicant is under 18 years of age) become the Contract of Enrolment ("the Contract").

The Acceptance of Offer must include:

- SGA's refund policy
- The circumstances in which personal information about the student may be shared with others
- The obligation of students to notify SGA of any change of address while enrolled in the course.

#### **5.2.8 Advising an unsuccessful applicant of alternative options**

If, once the credential verification is completed, the applicant is identified as not being eligible for entry to the Program, a review of alternative courses of study occurs from within other divisions of Study Group. Where possible, the applicant is advised of any he/she is eligible to enter. Should the applicant accept the alternative course of study, an appropriate Enrolment Offer Pack is issued.

#### **5.2.9 Record of enrolment**

Once the Acceptance of Offer has been signed by the applicant (and his/her parent or guardian if the applicant is under 18 years of age), and received by SGA the enrolment will be noted within the student database.

#### **5.2.10 Filing of enrolment documents**

All documentation, including the Application for Admission and supportive evidence, and signed Acceptance of Offer will be collated and a file created for the applicant.

#### **5.2.11 Confirmation of Enrolment**

Once the signed Acceptance of Offer has been received by SGA, the fees have been processed and a receipt issued, then the enrolment is confirmed within the student database and a Confirmation of Enrolment is generated and provided to the applicant.

If the applicant chooses to delay the commencement date before the issuing of a visa, the Admissions Officer (International Admissions Centre) or Registrar (or equivalent) (campus-based) ascertains the next most suitable date for the commencement, and adjusts SGA records accordingly. A new Confirmation of Enrolment is then provided to the applicant.

#### **5.2.12 Delaying commencement**

If the applicant requests to delay the commencement date after the issuing of a visa, the Admissions Officer (International Admissions Centre) or Registrar (or equivalent) (campus-based) determines the impact such a deferment will have on the finishing date of the course and will proceed in accordance with SGA's policy for deferring, suspending or cancelling a student's enrolment (SGA Deferring, suspending or cancelling enrolment).

SGA must not actively recruit a student where this clearly conflicts with its obligations under the National Code Standard 7 Transfer between registered providers. Refer to SGA International Student Transfer Policy and Procedures.

### **5.3 Commencement Procedure**

The following procedures apply during the period of student orientation, upon commencement:

- Student services staff and or administration staff at the location:
  - confirm that a signed Acceptance of Offer has been received by SGA
  - confirms that the student has brought the required documentation, which includes:
    - address details;
    - personal email address, and phone number(s);
    - name, address and phone number of the caregiver if under 18;
    - a photocopy of the personal details and visa pages from his/her passport;
  - checks to ensure that relevant fees have been paid. If the appropriate fees have not been paid the student will be advised of the payment options, and alternative arrangements made; and
  - ensures each student:
    - has an identification photograph taken and is issued with the appropriate identification card;
    - is issued with the timetable and an explanation is given; and
    - is provided with the Handbook, and guided through key policies and procedures, including academic progress, attendance, assessment, and grievances.

### **5.4 Younger Students**

If the applicant is less than eighteen years of age, a parent or legal guardian must also sign the Application for Admission and Acceptance of Offer. This documentation is retained within the student's file.

Education providers approving care arrangements for international applicants less than 18 years old who are seeking to enter Australia under a Student visa must:

- provide DHA with a signed statement (Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare) confirming that appropriate arrangements have been made for the student's accommodation, support and general welfare during the entire time of their stay in Australia until they turn 18, and
- notify DHA in writing within 24hrs of any changes to the care arrangements.

Additionally, students are required to obtain their education provider's approval to change these arrangements if they wish to do so after their arrival in Australia. For further details, refer to SGA Managing the Welfare of Under-18 Students Policy and Procedure.



## 5.5 Student Records

Each student is required to complete an *Application for Admission and Acceptance of Offer* prior to commencing studies. This provides the essential information for the identification process and must be retained in the student's file.

Staff in SGA's central Admissions function, and/or staff on campus enter the student details into the student database.

This creates a dedicated student file with:

- student name;
- gender;
- details of the Program with subjects to be studied;
- date of birth;
- a unique identification number for the student;
- local or overseas student classification;
- starting date and nominal completion date;
- fees applicable;
- name of concerned or overseas agent; and
- details of support services required, such as OSHC and Homestay.

The student attends orientation to commence the Program. At this time, student details are individually checked. A digital photograph of the student is then placed within the front screen of the student's electronic file for identification purposes.

Refusal of application, withdrawal of an offer of admission and cancellation of admission or enrolment

SGA reserves the right to refuse an application, withdraw an offer of admission and cancel admission or enrolment under the following conditions: when the applicant or enrolled student has provided untrue, inaccurate or incomplete information in their admission application; when SGA is not satisfied that an international applicant meets the Genuine Temporary Entrant and/or Genuine Student requirements set by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA), or when any legislation or regulation prohibits the student's admission and/or course commencement.

## 5.6 Appeals

An applicant may appeal against a decision made under this policy. Appeals must be made, in writing, to the International Admission Centre Director. The appeal decision will be based on the written material provided. To appeal a selection decision, an applicant will be required to provide evidence of the following:

- lodgement of an application for admission on time, in the correct manner, accompanied by all relevant documents; and
- satisfaction at the time of the application of all of the published entrance requirements to the program.

The circumstances under which an appeal may be considered are:

- The Study Group Australia Pty Ltd selection and admissions policy and procedures were not made available to the applicant; or
- Study Group Australia Pty Ltd did not apply the selection criteria as published in the selection and admissions policy and procedures, in the brochure or on the website.

Applicants who wish to appeal a decision made under this policy must do so in accordance with SGA's Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure within ten working days of receiving notification of the admission decision.

## 6. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed at a minimum of once every 5 years by the policy owner (or delegate) to ensure alignment to appropriate strategic direction and its continued relevance to current and planned operations. The next scheduled review of this document is listed in the document history section of this document.

## 7. Records Management

Records in association with this policy will be kept in accordance with SGA's Records Management Policy. For instance, records of all written agreements as well as receipts of payments made by students under the written agreement for at least 2 years after the person ceases to be an accepted student. Confidential documents related to the implementation of the policy will be maintained according to relevant privacy requirements.

## 8. Related Documents

SGA Student Privacy Policy, SGA Records Management Policy, SGA Advanced Standing and Credit Transfer Policy and Procedure, SGA Cancellation and Refund Policy and Procedure, SGA Deferment, Suspension, Withdrawal or Cancellation of Enrolment Policy, SGA Disability Policy and Procedure, SGA International Student Transfer Policy and Procedure, SGA Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure. See also forms for course withdrawal, and requesting a refund. Policies and forms can be accessed from the College's website.

## 9. Related Regulations

This policy has been developed in line with requirements set out in the: Education Services for Overseas (ESOS) Act 2000 (and its amendments); National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (the National Code) which complements existing national quality assurance frameworks in education and training including the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards, the English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) Standards 2018, the Foundation Standards (operating adjunct to the National Code), the NSW Education Act and related regulations for NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) registered High Schools, the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), the Tuition Protection Service (TPS), and other Commonwealth and State legislation and regulatory frameworks and standards including the Privacy Act 1988, Corporations Act 2001; and Competition and Consumer Act 2010.

### Document Approval

|                        |   |                        |                   |
|------------------------|---|------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Document ID</b>     | SGA Admissions Policy and Procedure   |                        |                   |
| <b>Policy Owner(s)</b> | Head of International Study Centres – ANZ and Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance |                        |                   |
| <b>Approved by</b>     | SGA Board of Directors  | <b>Date Approved</b>   | 6 September 2018  |
|                        |   | <b>Date Commencing</b> | 15 September 2018 |

### Document History

| <b>Commencing Date</b> | <b>Summary of Changes</b>  | <b>Next Review Date</b> |
|------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| 15 September 2018      | v1.0 Repeals and replaces SGA's Student Selection and Admissions Policy and Procedures – International Students and Replaced SGA's Student Selection and Admissions Policy and Procedures – Domestic Students. | September 2023          |

<sup>i</sup> References to Foundation courses herein apply only to Foundation courses delivered and awarded by SGA's Taylors College (Perth campus) and Flinders International Student Centre (CRICOS Provider Code 01682E). They do not apply to the University of Sydney Foundation Program (CRICOS Course Code: 022310D) delivered by SGA's Taylors College (Sydney campus) on behalf of the University of Sydney (CRICOS Provider code 00026A).