

Summary of the 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 Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016 (the Code), and provides a procedure that students can follow if they have concerns about their treatment by a New Zealand educational provider.

What is the Code?

The Code is a document which 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 educational provider. The Code is also available online from www.minedu.govt.nz/qoto/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 will be available from www.minedu.govt.nz/qoto/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 TEACHER IN CHARGE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS, 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 Students Disputes Resolution Scheme (DRS) via NZQA or www.istudent.org.nz.

What is the International Students Disputes Resolution Scheme (DRS)?

The DRS 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 Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016.

What will the DRS do?

The purpose of the DRS is to adjudicate on complaints from international students. The DRS will investigate complaints and determine if there has been a breach of the Code. The DRS 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 DRS 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 DRS may refer the complaint to the Review Panel. The DRS can determine if it considers that a breach of the Code is a serious breach. If the breach is a serious breach, the DRS 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 DRS can refer complaints to the Review Panel.

A summary of The Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016

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 recognised
- 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 DRS and the Review Panel to receive and adjudicate on student complaints.