

Replaces (please remove) Section 6.7 issued 05/05

6.7 POLICY ON STUDENT ADVICE, STUDENT WELFARE AND PASTORAL SUPPORT

The University of Southern Queensland, through its student advisory and welfare services, will seek to provide all students with:

- knowledge of the University, its facilities, services, policies and procedures;
- familiarity with the values of the University community;
- a campus environment which is conducive to successful tertiary study.

1 ADVICE TO STUDENTS ON ENROLMENT AND RELATED ISSUES

1.1 Students and prospective students will be provided with timely, consistent and accurate advice on all matters associated with enrolment including:

- descriptions and availability of programs and courses;
- application, registration and enrolment procedures;
- cancellation, deferral and leave of absence;
- transfer of enrolment to other programs;
- Commonwealth Support eg HECS-HELP and FEE-help;
- exemption and course transfer procedures;
- financial support available to students, eg Austudy;
- services available from Student Services;
- fees for full-fee students, both Australian and international;
- facilities and services for disabled persons;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support program;
- Student Guild membership.

1.2 Appropriately identified academic and administrative staff will be given adequate training to ensure their knowledge is current in relation to matters listed in paragraph 1.1 above to enable them to advise students correctly.

1.3 Students will be advised of the names/positions of staff in the Faculties, Student Management, Student Guild and Student Services from whom advice on enrolment and related issues may be obtained.

2 ORIENTATION/FACULTY HANDBOOKS

Each student will receive an orientation handbook at the commencement of their studies. Faculties are responsible for providing orientation handbooks for internal students. The Distance Education Centre is responsible for providing handbooks for external students. The International Office is responsible for providing handbooks for on-campus and distance education full-fee paying international students. Each orientation handbook should contain information at least on the following topics although Faculties and centres may add additional information appropriate to their needs:

- enrolment procedures;
- submission of assignments;
- examinations;
- student advisers;
- Student Services;
- Library;
- Information Technology Services;
- study methods;
- timetables for internal students;
- residential schools for external students;
- important regulations and policies directly affecting students;
- safety and security;
- sexual harassment policies;

Warning – Uncontrolled when printed. The current version of this document is kept on the USQ website.

- Student Guild;
- campus map.

3 STUDENT ACCESS TO TEACHING STAFF

3.1 Academic staff will advertise times during which they are available for consultation during semester and recess for both internal and external students. In determining consultation times, staff will take into account the timetable commitments of students by way of:

- offering consultation times on a number of days each week; and
- offering consultation times during different time periods of a day.

3.2 Students will be encouraged to make appointments for consultation within the times advertised by staff.

3.3 Students will be encouraged to indicate the nature of their inquiry or concern at the point of making an appointment in order to make effective use of consultation times.

3.4 The Distance Education Centre will be notified of consultation times available for external students.

3.5 Where appropriate, external students may be notified of the electronic mail and fax numbers of academic staff responsible for teaching courses in which they are enrolled so that communication may be made directly with those staff.

4 COMMUNICATION BETWEEN DISTANCE EDUCATION CENTRE, FACULTIES AND EXTERNAL STUDENTS

4.1 The Distance Education Centre will ensure that external students receive fast and accurate responses to their inquiries. All student enquiries received will be recorded into and out of the Distance Education Centre. The Distance Education Centre will advise academic staff in Faculties of queries received from students. It is expected that responses will be made to students without unnecessary delay. The Distance Education Centre will monitor the handling of student queries to ensure that responses are made as soon as practicable.

4.2 Faculties will advise the Distance Education Centre of times when academic staff will be available for consultation by external students, including details of leave being taken by lecturers and the name and contact number of an alternate staff member assigned to handle queries directed by students to an absent staff member.

4.3 The Distance Education Centre is responsible for receiving and recording all assignments received from external students, forwarding them to the appropriate Faculties for assessment and returning them to students as soon as practicable.

5 RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

5.1 The International Office will strive to ensure international students have:

- necessary knowledge of University facilities, services, policies and procedures;
- the opportunity to gain familiarity and understanding of Australian and University culture;
- a campus environment conducive to their successful study;
- the opportunity to have an individual study environment conducive to successful study.

5.2 The International Office will achieve these outcomes through the provision of appropriate specialist support services to international students in areas such as:

- recruitment of international students;
- development of promotional materials, in conjunction with Faculties;
- administration of application and enrolment processes;
- welcome and transportation of students to Toowoomba;
- arrangement of temporary accommodation;

- involvement in orientation program;
- immigration, visa and passport requirements;
- Medibank enrolment;
- encouraging students to visit and use the International Office services;
- student referral to appropriate USQ facilities and support services;
- student exchange programs;
- cultural and national day activities.

6 ACADEMIC GUIDANCE AND CAREER PLANNING

- 6.1 Each Faculty will establish an appropriate student advisory scheme, the exact nature of which will be determined by the Faculty. Students will be informed of the scheme, its operation and those staff involved in providing advice.
- 6.2 Enrolled and prospective students will be provided with accurate and appropriate advice, information and counselling from specifically designated persons in the University who have received appropriate training.
- 6.3 Training provided to staff in academic guidance and career planning procedures will include:
- principles and techniques of career planning and academic guidance;
 - programs offered by USQ, their admission requirements, structures and related career opportunities;
 - academic support services available to students;
 - relevant accountability and liability issues;
 - boundaries of expertise and appropriate referrals.

7 REFERRAL OF STUDENTS TO STUDENT SERVICES

- 7.1 While it is recognised that Faculties and service units have the expertise to provide advice and information about academic and course matters, any other matter/s requiring professional and specialised assistance in the areas listed below will be appropriately referred to Student Services:
- accommodation;
 - Austudy;
 - chaplaincy;
 - health;
 - financial counselling;
 - personal counselling;
 - learning enhancement (study skills);
 - careers and employment advice, counselling and information;
 - specific support services for international students.
- 7.2 Decisions to make appropriate referrals to/from Student Services will take into account:
- the needs and best interests of the student/s;
 - the boundaries of the referring staff member's expertise to deal with the specialised matters listed above;
 - relevant accountability and liability issues (eg awareness of possible legal consequences which may arise from the information, advice and counselling that is, or is not, provided).

8 SERVICES AND FACILITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

- 8.1 The University will provide a supportive environment for students with a disability through its commitment to enhancing opportunities for access, optimal participation and subsequent employment.
- 8.2 Relevant sections of the University will contribute to the services and overall support offered to students with disability, eg Student Services, Library, Residential Colleges, Information Technology Services, Student Management, Distance Education Centre and all Faculties.

9 SERVICES TO ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENTS

- 9.1 The Centre for Aboriginal Indigenous Knowledges will strive to ensure that:
- the academic and welfare needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are catered for;
 - optimum participation and graduation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are achieved.
- 9.2 The Centre for Aboriginal Indigenous Knowledges will achieve these outcomes through the provision of appropriate specialist support services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, for instance by:
- providing a supportive physical, cultural, emotional and intellectual environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, through access, progression, graduation and subsequent employment opportunities;
 - identifying and responding to needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
 - developing programs particular to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
 - developing programs with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives for Faculty use;
 - cooperating with the various welfare and advisory services available on campus to provide effective services appropriate to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
 - providing an interface between the University and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community of Toowoomba;
 - provision of specialist support services to all University units, including the Faculties, in relation to issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students specifically and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community generally.

10 STUDENT GUILD SERVICES AND PROGRAMS PROVISION

- 10.1 The Student Guild will strive to ensure that students have:
- the opportunity to participate in the Governance of the Student Guild;
 - the opportunity to play an important part in the development of the University facilities, services, policies and procedures;
 - access to necessary, high quality and convenient academic and welfare advocacy and support services;
 - the opportunity to participate in and utilise cultural, sporting and recreational activities and facilities on campus;
 - access to necessary, high quality and convenient commercial services and facilities (where the commercial proceeds are no more than reasonable in the circumstances, and are utilised for further such service and facility development).
- 10.2 The Student Guild will provide these outcomes through the provision to members of appropriate information, advice, representation and services in areas such as:
- USQ Student Guild Governance;
 - USQ Student Guild academic and welfare services;
 - USQ Student Guild cultural activities and events;
 - USQ Student Guild affiliated clubs and societies;
 - USQ Student Guild sport and recreation;
 - USQ Student Guild commercial activities.