

# FIRST YEAR ORIENTATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE



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## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy and procedure outlines the first year orientation and transition course activities and services offered at CQUniversity.

## 2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy and procedure applies to commencing CQUniversity students in English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS), undergraduate and postgraduate units.
- 2.2 A comprehensive first year transition and orientation course is available to all new undergraduate and postgraduate students to CQUniversity.

## 3 POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 The University offers both an online introductory course, Orientation Online, and orientation events on campuses before term begins to support new student to become familiar with the tertiary environment and the skills and knowledge they need to succeed.

### Compulsory course activities

- 3.2 Completing the Orientation Online course is compulsory for all commencing undergraduate and postgraduate students. The course should be completed by new students after accepting an offer to study at the University and before the start of term.
- 3.3 Commencing undergraduate students must complete the Student Readiness Questionnaire when they accept an offer to study at the University.
- 3.4 International students must have a specific session covering the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#) (Cwlth).

- 3.5 International students must also attend an orientation event on campus.

## **Recommended course activities**

- 3.6 In addition to the compulsory course requirements, there are recommended orientation and transition activities which are offered to students based on their mode of study, course and location. These include familiarisation with the University's virtual and/or physical environment, administrative and academic processes, and support services. These also include opportunities to interact with academic and professional staff and peers, build self-directed learning skills and access student mentors.
- 3.7 Orientation events are held at University campuses before start of term for undergraduate and postgraduate students. Orientation events for ELICOS students are held a few days prior the start of admit week.

## **4 PROCEDURE**

### **Compulsory course activities**

#### **Student readiness questionnaire**

- 4.1 The Student Readiness Questionnaire is an evidence-based, early intervention course. It consists of a short survey which asks questions pertaining to the student's personal situation, and expectations of being a student. Student Readiness Questionnaire invitations are emailed to undergraduate students who have accepted an offer with the University. Student Readiness Questionnaire results are assessed so that support is provided to students based on their individual circumstances.

#### **Orientation online**

- 4.2 Orientation Online is an interactive, self-paced course designed to familiarise students with the key aspects of the learning context and introduce University services. It is located in the University's online learning management system.
- 4.3 New undergraduate and postgraduate students who have accepted an offer with the University will be automatically enrolled into Orientation Online from one month prior to the start of term. Orientation Online will remain open to the students to complete for their first two terms of study.
- 4.4 Whilst the Orientation Online course is aimed for undergraduate and postgraduate students, new students in non-award and research courses may enrol into Orientation Online through a request to the Technology and Services Assistance Centre (TaSAC).

#### **International students**

- 4.5 International students must have a specific orientation session to understand the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students](#). This session also provides information on and access to:
- support services available to assist with the transition into life and study in Australia
  - English language and study assistance programs
  - any relevant legal services - availability and the referral process
  - emergency and health services – for example, campus security
  - facilities and resources
  - complaints and appeals processes
  - requirements for course attendance and progress, as appropriate
  - support services available to assist students with general or personal circumstances that are adversely affecting their education in Australia, and
  - services students can access for information on their employment rights and conditions, and how to resolve workplace issues.

- 4.6 Attendance records will be kept for international students attending the international orientation sessions. Late arriving international students will be provided with all of the above information in structured small group or one on one sessions.

### **Recommended orientation activities**

- 4.7 The first year of learning can present challenges to all new learners, particularly those students from backgrounds in which higher education might not be a typical path. Regardless of the mode of study or campus, the University provides structured orientation courses to cater to the diverse needs of learners who may be at different stages of preparedness for university. These experiences ensure new students have opportunities to:
- identify and meet key academic, support and other relevant campus employees to build connections within the University
  - be introduced to the University's learning management system and understand how it is used to support learning
  - familiarise themselves with academic and support services that will assist with the development of successful study and learning habits
  - participate in a peer mentoring course to build peer networks, and
  - develop a sense of belonging to the University.
- 4.8 The University aims to deliver a consistent standard of orientation content across campuses and delivery sites.
- 4.9 Orientation Online provides information for new students and practice opportunities to use features of the learning management system prior to commencement of studies. Orientation Online is also a resource for students to refer back to during their first two terms of study.

### **Face-to-face orientation**

- 4.10 An orientation course can be conducted at each University campus or supported study location. Face-to-face activities build on the online experience by providing opportunities for new students to meet peers, academic and professional employees, and familiarise themselves with their campus environment and services.

### **Peer mentoring**

- 4.11 All undergraduate and postgraduate students have access to student mentors for the duration of their first year of study. Mentors do not provide academic tutoring or counselling, but rather assist new students with study skills support and navigating University services. This could be via the student mentor program or similar program.

### **Evaluation and feedback**

- 4.12 Evaluation and feedback from new students about the orientation activities provided by the University remains a key feature of the process of continuous improvement.
- 4.13 At the conclusion of the Orientation Online course, students are asked to participate in a survey which asks questions about their course experience. Surveys results are reviewed quarterly by Student Communications and the course updated as required.
- 4.14 Each term a survey will be distributed, via email, to students who attended campus orientation events for that period. Student Experience and Enrichment will collate, analyse and report the results from all campuses to the Director Student Engagement annually.

## 5 RESPONSIBILITIES

### Compliance, monitoring and review

- 5.1 The Director Student Engagement is responsible for implementing, monitoring, reviewing and ensuring compliance with this policy and procedure.

### Reporting

- 5.2 Employee and student evaluations of the Orientation Course will be conducted annually. The results of these from across campuses will be collated, analysed and reported to the Director Student Engagement annually.

### Records management

- 5.3 Employees must manage records in accordance with the [Records Management Policy and Procedure](#). This includes retaining these records in a recognised University recordkeeping information system.
- 5.4 University records must be retained for the minimum periods specified in the relevant [Retention and Disposal Schedule](#). Before disposing of any records, approval must be sought from the Records and Privacy Team (email [records@cqu.edu.au](mailto:records@cqu.edu.au)).

## 6 DEFINITIONS

- 6.1 Terms not defined in this document may be in the University [glossary](#).

## 7 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

[National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#) (Cwlth)

## 8 FEEDBACK

- 8.1 Feedback about this document can be emailed to [policy@cqu.edu.au](mailto:policy@cqu.edu.au).

## 9 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

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Delegated Approval Authority	Vice-President (Student Success)
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Notes	This document was formerly known as the First Year Transition and Orientation Policy and Procedure (25/06/2016). This document replaced the First Year Transition and Orientation Policy, First Year Transition and Orientation Procedure and First Year Transition and Orientation Principles (29/05/2013).