



## Welfare and Accommodation Selecting, Screening and Monitoring Policy

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CRICOS Provider Code: 00577C

### Source of Obligation

Standard 5.3.7 of the National Code requires that where the School takes on responsibility under the Migration Regulations 1994 (Cth) for approving the accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements for a student under 18 years of age, the School must have documented policies and procedures for selecting, screening and monitoring any third parties engaged by them to organise and assess welfare and accommodation arrangements.

### Strathcona's Policy

It is the School's policy to engage in comprehensive selection, screening and monitoring processes when engaging third parties, such as:

- homestay service providers / agencies / partners
- homestay hosts / providers / families / homes
- student support service providers / agencies / partners, and
- welfare and support persons ("support persons")

to assist with the delivery of accommodation and welfare support services for our overseas students, particularly those who are under 18 years of age.

The School recognises it's non-delegable responsibility for the care and supervision of overseas students and at no point in time does the School use the third party providers to verify that the overseas student's accommodation and welfare is suitable for their age and needs. This remains always with the School.

The School however, acknowledges that third party service providers will have their own internal selection, screening and monitoring procedures that are independent of the School and used by the provider for the purpose of their internal registration procedures. The School does not rely on these third party verification checks but may use these registered users / members as shortlists for further assessment under the School's selection, screening and monitoring procedures.



In providing accommodation and additional support services to overseas students:

- the homestay service provider is responsible for providing agency screened homestay accommodation 'shortlists', including details of agency-screened homestay options for the School to review, visit and potentially approve
- the homestay host is responsible for providing a home that is welcoming, safe and compliant to the School's requirements and meets the overseas students age and needs
- the student support service provider is responsible for referring agency screened support persons for the School to interview, assess and potentially use
- the support person is responsible for providing supervision and support to the overseas student that is additional to, but not in place of, the support and counselling the School would normally provide to all students.

### **Screening**

The School has screening procedures in place to ensure that third parties engaged by the School are suitably trained, qualified, experienced and have appropriate internal controls and measures in place to assist the School in providing accommodation and welfare support services to overseas student.

#### **Screening homestay service providers**

The School carefully screens homestay service providers (i.e. accommodation agencies) for quality of service, ethical standards and adherence to the child safe standards before entering into a service agreement with the provider. The screening process involves:

- Having an initial meeting with the service provider to gain an understanding of the business and its operations
- Obtaining and verifying the service provider's policies and procedures in relation to screening, selecting and monitoring its homestay hosts and its compliance with the child safe standards
- Informing the service provider of the School's child safe practices and the requirement and expectation of the service provider to comply with these practices
- Reference checking and consulting with network schools on the provider's quality of service

Once screening is completed and approved, a service agreement, prepared by the School's solicitor, is provided to the service provider to execute.



### **Screening homestay hosts**

The School carefully screens homestay hosts (i.e. the property and the people within the home) to ensure that the arrangement is appropriate to the student's age and needs. This is completed prior to placing the student with the homestay host (initial screening) and reviewed every 6 months thereafter (ongoing monitoring).

### ***Screening adult family members***

The Overseas Student Coordinator completes the initial screening of the homestay host(s) by meeting with the homestay host and completing the Overseas Student Welfare and Accommodation Assessment Form, identifying and verifying the suitability of all adult family members in the home. This screening process includes:

- sighting and verifying the WWCC status of all adult family members is valid and current against the WWCC Victoria online checking tool
- sighting proof of personal identity (i.e. driver's license / passport)
- gaining an understanding of the homestay host experience / history in providing homestay accommodation / working with children
- reference checking against the School's endorsed and approved homestay service provider partner

### ***Screening the homestay accommodation***

The Overseas Student Coordinator completes the initial screening of the homestay home by visiting the proposed accommodation and verifying the suitability of the property to the student's age, needs and expectations. This screening process includes:

- completing an onsite home inspection, filling in the Overseas Student Welfare and Accommodation Assessment Form and ensuring that the property is suitable to accommodate overseas students (unless the property has been verified by a site visit in relation to another student in the previous three months)
- taking photos of the proposed living arrangement including the student's bedroom, bathroom facilities, kitchen and shared areas
- putting in place any corrective actions (if applicable) that must be met prior to the student being placed in the home



### **Screening student support service providers**

The School carefully screens welfare and support service providers (i.e. student support service agencies) for quality of service, ethical standards and adherence to the child safe standards before entering into a service agreement with the provider. The screening process involves:

- Having an initial meeting with the service provider to gain an understanding of the business and its operations
- Obtaining and verifying the service provider's policies and procedures in relation to screening, selecting and monitoring of its welfare support staff that it refers to the School and its compliance with the child safe standards
- Informing the service provider of the School's child safe practices and the requirement and expectation of the service provider to comply with these practices
- Reference checking and consulting with network schools on the provider's quality of service

Once screening is completed and approved, a service agreement, prepared by the School's solicitor, is provided to the service provider to execute.

### **Screening welfare and support person**

The School carefully screens support persons directly and indirectly through a number of procedures, by:

- obtaining and verifying the support service provider's policies and procedures in relation to screening, selecting and monitoring of its welfare support staff (support person) that it refers to the School
- sighting and verifying the WWCC status of all support persons that are referred to the School to ensure it is valid and current against the WWCC Victoria online checking tool
- sighting proof of personal identity (i.e. driver's license / passport)
- interviewing and assessing the support person's experience and suitability in providing welfare and support services to overseas students

### **Selection**

Third party providers are selected on merit, quality of service and adherence to the child safe standards as per the School's screening process.

### **Selecting homestay service providers**

Homestay service providers are selected on merit, quality of service and adherence to the child safe standards as per the School's screening process.

### **Selecting homestay hosts**

Strathcona will select the homestay host to be assigned to the overseas student by:

- matching homestay hosts with students that share similar interests and expectations
- interviewing and assessing the homestay host's experience and suitability in providing homestay accommodation and working with children
- reference checking the homestay hosts with the School's endorsed and approved homestay service provider partner
- completing the Overseas Student Welfare and Accommodation Assessment Form for the particular engagement

### ***Onsite induction of homestay hosts***

For new homestay hosts, the Overseas Student Coordinator will visit the home and induct all adult family members on the School's:

- child safe policies and procedures
- expectations, roles and responsibilities of homestay hosts
- emergency and critical incident management procedures
- emergency contact details

### **Selecting student support service providers**

Student support service providers are selected on merit, quality of service and adherence to the child safe standards as per the School's screening process.

### **Selecting welfare and support person**

Strathcona will select the support person to be assigned to the overseas student by reviewing the application forms completed by the overseas student to understand their cultural background, life experiences and interests and assigning a support person with the traits that would be most suitable for their age and needs.

### ***Induction of Support Persons***

For new support persons selected by the School, the Overseas Student Coordinator arranges an onsite/online meeting with the support person to induct them on the School's:

- child safe policies and procedures
- expectations, roles and responsibilities of the support person
- emergency and critical incident management procedures
- emergency contact details

### **Monitoring**

The School monitors third party providers for ongoing quality of service, ethical standards and adherence to the child safe standards by conducting regular feedback and performance reviews.

#### **Monitoring homestay service providers**

Homestay service providers are monitored for ongoing suitability through an annual feedback and performance review.

#### ***Annual Feedback Meeting***

A meeting is held once a year between School representatives and the homestay service provider to review the quality of shortlisted homestay homes referred to the School and ensure that it continues to meet the service agreement between both parties..

#### ***Performance reviews***

The Overseas Student Coordinator completes a performance review for the homestay service provider once per year, to ensure that the service provider continues to meet the service requirements and expectations of the School. The completed review form is stored in the homestay service provider's file and discussed in the annual feedback meeting with the service provider.

#### **Monitoring homestay hosts**

The School monitors homestay hosts for ongoing suitability by conducting regular onsite inspections (every 6 months) as well as obtaining regular feedback from overseas students living in the home.

#### ***Ongoing monitoring (every 6 months)***

An onsite inspection of the property is completed every 6 months after the overseas student is placed in the home. The ongoing suitability of the property to accommodate an overseas student as well as the ongoing suitability of adult family members in the home to provide homestay accommodation and remain in child connected work (WWCC re-verification checks) is reviewed and assessed using the Overseas Student Welfare and Accommodation Assessment Form.

### ***Ongoing training of homestay hosts***

For existing homestay hosts, the Overseas Student Coordinator as part of the 6 monthly home inspection, will remind all adult family members of the School's:

- child safe policies and procedures
- expectations, roles and responsibilities of homestay hosts
- emergency and critical incident management procedures
- emergency contact details

and provide an update to any legislative or policy changes that may affect the homestay host.

### ***Feedback Forms***

The Overseas Student Coordinator seeks feedback from overseas students on their experience in living with the homestay hosts.

The Feedback Form is completed by the overseas student in a meeting with the Overseas Student Coordinator 3 months after moving into their homestay home and every 12 months thereafter.

### ***Monitoring student support service providers***

Student support service providers are monitored for ongoing suitability through an annual feedback and performance review.

### ***Annual Feedback Meeting***

A meeting is held once a year between School representatives and the student support service provider to review the quality of support persons referred to the School and ensure that it continues to meet the service agreement between both parties.

### ***Performance reviews***

The Overseas Student Coordinator completes a performance review for the student support service provider once per year, to ensure that the service provider continues to meet the service requirements and expectations of the School. The completed review form is stored in the student support service provider's file and discussed in the annual feedback meeting with the service provider.

### ***Monitoring support persons***

The School monitors support persons for ongoing quality of service, ethical standards, adherence to the child safe standards and suitability to meet the age and needs of their assigned overseas student by:

- conducting regular student feedback reviews
- providing ongoing training of support persons

- ensuring that WWCC for the support person remains valid and current against the WWCC Victoria online checking tool (WWCC re-verification checks)

### ***Feedback Forms***

The Overseas Student Coordinator seeks feedback from overseas students on their experience with the support person.

The Feedback Form is completed by the overseas student in a meeting with the Overseas Student Coordinator 3 months after being assigned with their Support Person and every 12 months thereafter.

### ***Ongoing training of support persons***

For existing support persons, the Overseas Student Coordinator, on an annual basis, arranges an onsite / online information and awareness session with the support person to go over the School's:

- child safe policies and procedures
- expectations, roles and responsibilities of the support person
- emergency and critical incident management procedures
- emergency contact details

and provide an update to any legislative or policy changes that may affect their work and role as a support person engaged by the School.

### ***WWCC Re-verification Checks***

This is checked monthly against the Victorian WWCC database using the WWC Status Checker tool and sighted and verified annually as part of the information and awareness session between the Overseas Student Coordinator and the Support Person.

### **Record Keeping**

The School maintains evidence of compliance with this policy by maintaining records of selection, screening and monitoring activities undertaken by the School in accordance with this policy and keep any written agreements entered into by the School. Records will be maintained in accordance with our **Overseas Students Records Management and Retention Policy**.