



Type: Overseas Students – CRICOS Policies and Procedures	Name: Accommodation and Welfare Policy	Policy No: OS-0002
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ACCOMMODATION AND WELFARE POLICY

Care for younger students under 18 years

St Hilda's School is a CRICOS – Registered provider which enrolls younger students under 18 years of age. As Part of the registration obligations St Hilda's must satisfy Commonwealth and State legislation, as well as any other regulatory requirements, relating to child welfare and protection for any overseas student enrolled who is under 18 years of age.

These obligations include ensuring that all overseas students under 18 years of age are given age- and culturally appropriate information on:

- Who to contact in emergency situations, including number/s of a nominated staff member, and
- How to seek assistance and report any incident or allegation involving actual or alleged sexual, physical or other abuse.

St Hilda's School has documented procedures relating to child welfare and safety, and will implement these procedures in the event that there are any concerns for the welfare of a student under 18 years of age.

Accommodation and care options for overseas students under 18 years.

It is a condition of the student visa that students under the age of 18 maintain adequate welfare and accommodation arrangements. It is a condition of enrolment that students over 18 years also maintain school approved accommodation arrangements.

St Hilda's School approves the following accommodation and care options for overseas students:

1. **The Preparatory to Year 12 Visa Student will live with a parent or relative approved by the Department of Home Affairs (Immigration).**

In this case:

- i. The School does not provide a welfare letter (CAAW) via PRISMS. The student's family completes Form 157N and provides proof of relationship to Department of Home Affairs (Immigration) at the time of visa application for approval of these arrangements. The Department of Home Affairs (Immigration) must also approve any further change of welfare arrangements.
- ii. If the adult responsible for the welfare, accommodation and other support arrangements for a student under 18 years holds a Student guardian Visa (subclass 590), all obligations and conditions of this visa must be met, including:

- a) not leaving Australia without the nominating student unless there are compassionate and compelling circumstances and the School has first approved alternative welfare and accommodation arrangements for the student for the adult's period of absence, and
- b) advising the Department of Home Affairs (Immigration) of any change of address, passport or other changes of circumstances.

St Hilda's School requires holders of Student Guardian Visas to:

- i. maintain Overseas Visitor Health Cover for themselves and any dependent children living with them in Australia
- ii. immediately advise the School of any change to address or contact details
- iii. immediately advise the School if there are any compassionate or compelling reasons to travel overseas or not be at home for an extended period of time to care for the student.

If there is a valid reason for travelling overseas, and the School is able to approve alternative accommodation and care arrangements for the Year 6 to Year 12 student for the period of student guardian visa holder's absence, the School will provide documentation approving temporary care arrangements for the student to the student's guardian and for the Department of Home Affairs (Immigration) via PRISMS.

If there is not a valid reason for travelling overseas, or if the School is not able to approve alternative accommodation and care arrangements for the Preparatory to Year 12 student for the period of student guardian visa holder's absence, the student will need to travel overseas with the holder of the student guardian visa. In this case, the School will advise if compulsory attendance requirements will or will not be affected by the student's absence.

2. The student will live in school approved accommodation and welfare arrangements and St Hilda's School will generate the welfare letter (CAAW) via PRISMS to accompany the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).

Accommodation options that may be approved by St Hilda's School for full fee paying 500 (formerly 571) visa subclass students under 18 years of age include:

- i. School Boarding House
- ii. Pathway to Boarding via Homestay Program operated by Studymatch t/a Australian Student Accommodation Centre. Please see Additional Information, below.

St Hilda's School will maintain approval of accommodation and care arrangements until:

- i. The student completes the course and departs Australia
- ii. the student turns 18 years
- iii. any appeals processes in relation to St Hilda's School's intentions to cancel the student's enrolment has been finalised (including suspensions, cancellations, course progress and attendance)
- iv. the student has alternative welfare arrangements approved by another registered provider

- v. a parent or nominated relative approved by the Department of Home Affairs (Immigration) assumes care of the student
- vi. St Hilda's School has notified the Department of Home Affairs (Immigration) that it is no longer able to approve the student's welfare arrangements and has taken the required action after not being able to contact the student.

Any accommodation, welfare and other support arrangements for the student must be approved by St Hilda's School, including arrangements provided by third parties.

Accommodation and care arrangements are checked prior to approval and at least every six months thereafter to ensure they are appropriate to the student's age and needs.

Any adults involved in or providing accommodation and welfare arrangements to the student have a blue card as appropriate (<https://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/>).

Any changes to approved arrangements must also be approved by the School. This includes any requests by students under 18 years of age to attend "Schoolies Week" on completion of Year 12.

If a student cannot be located and the School has concerns for her welfare, the School will contact the student's parents / legal guardian and notify the police and any other relevant authorities.

If a student for whom the School has issued a CAAW refuses to maintain approved arrangements, the School will report this to the Department of Home Affairs (Immigration) and advise the student to contact the Department of Home Affairs (Immigration) to ensure visa implications are understood. (See Department of Home Affairs (Immigration) office addresses at: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about/contact/offices-locations/australia>).

In the event of a significant or critical welfare issue involving the student, and if determined necessary by the school, a parent, legal guardian or approved relative agrees to travel to a designated location within 2 days to assume care of the student until the situation has been resolved to the school's satisfaction.

If a parent / nominated guardian wishes to assume welfare responsibility, the parent / nominated guardian must notify the school as soon as practicable of their intentions and must provide the school with written evidence of a guardian visa grant.

3. For School vacation periods, students under 18 years of age for whom St Hilda's School has issued a CAAW will:

- i. return home to parents, or
- ii. continue to live in / is placed in Homestay arranged and approved by the school, or
- iii. apply for approval to spend the vacation with relatives or a friend's family, or
- iv. apply to attend a supervised excursion, camp, etc., if all requirements are met in order to attain school approval.

Students are not permitted to stay in Australia during the School's end of year closure unless a parent or guardian assumes welfare.

4. Pathway to Boarding via Homestay arrangements at St Hilda's School

If the St Hilda's School Boarding House is at capacity, a placement in the Pathway to Boarding via Homestay arrangements at St Hilda's School operated by Studymatch t/a Australian Student Accommodation Centre may be offered. The Pathway to Boarding via Homestay arrangements at St Hilda's School operated by Studymatch t/a Australian Student Accommodation Centre meets Queensland legislative requirements for child protection as well as Standard 5 of the 2018 National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students.

These include:

- i. Continuous dates for approved welfare arrangements
- ii. Documented procedures for checking suitability of accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements before a student is placed in an approved arrangement, and at least every six months thereafter, covering:
 - o Guidelines for selecting, screening and monitoring each family and ensuring the family can provide age appropriate care and facilities for the duration of the student's enrolment at the school
 - o Criteria about accommodation services to be provided, and contract for arrangements about providing accommodation services
 - o Orientation program for families new to provision of homestay services
 - o Compliant Homestay risk management strategy, reviewed annually, undertaken by operator of the homestay program
- iii. Blue cards as required for adults living in the homestay / private arrangement, other than overseas students, or who otherwise have regular contact with the student.