

# Student Orientation Policy and Procedure

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to provide a framework and set of principles to underpin the approach to providing an orientation program to students that presents new learners with an inspiring and welcoming first impression of The Australian Performing Arts Conservatory (APAC) and successfully assists them to transition into their academic studies and, for commencing international students, to life in Australia.

### 1.2. Scope

This policy and procedure applies to APAC staff, prospective students, commencing students, and members of APAC's decision-making bodies.

### 1.3. Principles

APAC's approach to providing orientation aims to:

- help new learners become comfortable and confident in their new environment as quickly as possible by providing proactive, ongoing communication of essential information prior to arrival and upon arrival;
- facilitate a structured orientation program that outlines clear orientation tasks and timelines to commencing students and provides essential information to commencing domestic and international students to enable a successful transition to studies both academically and personally for these cohorts;
- provide essential information pre-arrival via the Student Handbook and the website;
- provide an inspiring, inclusive, and welcoming first impression of campus and staff to build a sense of belonging; a sense of safety; and a sense of welcome for commencing students with both their campus and classroom during the orientation program;
- make available an equivalent orientation program for late arrivals and for students who are not commencing at the beginning of the course;
- facilitate a process of continuous improvement whereby APAC will regularly review the effectiveness of its orientation program via the collection of feedback from staff and students;
- arrange opportunities for international students to connect with one another and APAC staff from their home countries.

## 2. Policy Statement

### 2.1. Legislative and Regulatory Compliance

The offered orientation program for commencing students will be compliant with education provider obligations under the Higher Education Standards (Threshold Standards) 2021 and Standard 6 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.

All staff members involved in international student orientation activities are aware of APAC's obligations under the ESOS framework and the potential implications for international students arising from the exercise of these obligations.

### 2.2. Orientation Program

The student orientation program should include activities, information, and policies and procedures that cover the following aspects of learning and campus life. Information on student support services should include offered support and provided referrals from APAC's support services at no additional cost to students.

#### 2.2.1. Administration

- Hours of Study
- Absence and Attendance
- Satisfactory course progress
- Critical Dates
- Complaints and appeals
- Assessment
- Policies and Procedures
- Academic and Personal Assistance

#### 2.2.2. The Organisation

- History
- Organisational Structure
- Products and Services

#### 2.2.3. Support Services

- Student Contact Officer
- Academic and Learning Support
- English Language support
- Personal Support
- Emergency Services
- Health Services
- Legal Services
- Fair Work Ombudsman

#### **2.2.4. Health and Safety**

- Health and Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Responsibilities
- Hazard/Incident Reporting
- Safe Work Procedures
- Electrical Safety
- Fire Exits/Drills
- Hazardous Substances
- Manual Handling
- Drugs/Alcohol/Smoking
- First Aid
- Personal Protective Clothing (PPE)
- Safety Co-Ordinator/Representative

#### **2.2.5. Campus Tour**

- Evacuation Plan
- Entrances/Exits
- Facilities and Resources
- Toilets
- Classrooms

### **2.3. Orientation Review**

APAC will regularly review the effectiveness of its orientation program through staff and student feedback, and external expert advice, and will take measures to address deficiencies and implement improvements.

## **3. Procedure**

### **3.1. Date of Orientation**

Orientation is scheduled on the Wednesday prior to the commencement of the Trimester. Any variation to this is to be tabled for discussion at the Campus Management Committee meeting.

Orientation Day (O'Day) dates are to be included, as a minimum, in the following:

- Paradigm, for inclusion in Offer Letter
- Student Handbook
- Academic Calendar
- Campus Management Team Agenda

Continuing students are invited to participate in Orientation activities as a 'refresher' should they choose.

### 3.2. **Orientation Day Schedule** the Orientation Schedule template is stored in **SharePoint – Home > Policies and Procedures > Orientation > Orientation Day Schedules**

The schedule document requires close monitoring and version control to ensure all variations in preparation are managed and updated in the Schedule.

The schedule is a mix of info-based sessions and interactive sessions that cover all aspects deemed essential in preparing the student for the commencement of their studies.

### 3.3. **Key Speakers**

Key speakers remain set as part of the Orientation Day Schedule. The key speakers include the CEO, Director of Higher Education (DoHE), Heads of Discipline (HoD) and the Admissions and Compliance Manager. An email is sent to all speakers, both internal and external, to confirm dates and times for the next Orientation Day.

Feedback from staff or students may result in a speaker being added to the program or a request to change content of presentations.

One week prior to Orientation Day, the speaker's placement in the schedule is confirmed and a request for information on any equipment or resource requirements is sent. This includes the speaker supplying the Production Manager with any relevant slides or printed resources.

All orientation talks are delivered in the lecture room while practical sessions are held in the relevant learning spaces (studios, black box rooms).

### 3.4. **Preparation of Orientation Packs**

APAC Orientation packs will include the following.

- Welcome from key staff (CEO/DoHE/HoD)
  - These documents are not dated but are to be reviewed periodically to ensure continued relevance.
  - Printing is required seven (7) days before Orientation for collating.
- Orientation Day Schedule
  - The schedule is version controlled and final version set by COB on the Friday prior to Orientation Day.
- Academic Calendar
- Approved APAC merchandise

### 3.5. **Campus Tour**

The campus tour covers various aspects and appropriate staff are assigned roles according to the aspect of the tour. Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure inclusion and accessibility for students.

Fire safety training and identification of emergency exits is carried out by the Chief Fire Safety Warden during the campus tour. HOD's give a more detailed tour of studios/black-boxes/learning spaces that includes housekeeping rules pertinent to each space during the break-off sessions.

Introduction of Chief and Deputy Chief Fire Officer and how they are identified in the event of an evacuation.

Students are taken through the evacuation procedure (an actual drill) and advised that drills will be conducted throughout the year.

### **3.6. Campus Preparation**

It is noted that prior to O'Day, End of Trimester activities and exams leave the campus in a state of disarray which needs to be addressed by everyone. To assist in preparations a broadcast email from the Production Manager is sent to all staff involved in Orientation Day program one week prior to Orientation Day.

APAC Staff are requested to:

- Restore all classrooms to neutral.
- Ensure common areas are cleared of unnecessary objects.
- Ensure equipment is properly stored.

### **3.7. Critical Dates/Events**

O'Day week 1 - Production Manager circulates schedule to key speakers with a response deadline of COB Friday before O'Day

O'Day 2 days prior - Campus clean-up by all staff

### **3.8. Attendance /Absence**

Upon arrival at orientation, students are to report to support staff to have their arrival and attendance recorded for reporting purposes. Student attendance at Orientation and the Fire Safety Training is noted by the Administration Officer and is recorded in Paradigm.

For students who are not present at Orientation Day (tabled at the following Campus Management Committee meeting for noting), an individual orientation is to commence on the day the student arrives on campus. Individual orientation, as with Orientation Day, is delivered by the same staff allocated to deliver each aspect of the orientation schedule where possible, i.e.: Chief Fire Safety Warden, HOD's etc.

The Individual Orientation Checklist is available in Sharepoint folder *Home > Policies and Procedures > Orientation >*.

Administration will ensure all items are completed by the relevant staff member and once completed, will upload the checklist to the student file and update the orientation and fire safety training fields in Paradigm.

### **3.9. Feedback**

Feedback is sought from new students through an Orientation Survey on what was of interest, what was helpful and what wasn't interesting. It is gathering the student's perspectives on what was/wasn't engaging, interactive, fun etc and how it could be improved.

The Orientation Survey is distributed in Week 2 and is completed during their Research and Comms class, and it remains the student's decision on whether they complete it. It is noted that students from smaller cohorts may be reluctant to complete the survey due to lack of anonymity.

Results of the survey will be tabled at the next Campus Management Committee meeting for determination of whether feedback is noted or implemented as continuous improvement.

In addition to feedback from new students, feedback is also sought from staff with Orientation Day being a standing item on the Campus Management Committee Agenda and recorded via the meeting minutes.

## **4. Responsibilities**

### **4.1. Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**

The CEO is responsible for the approval of this procedure.

### **4.2. Student Services**

Ultimate responsibility for the orientation program resides with the Student Services function, under direction of the CEO. Management of the orientation program may be delegated to a "responsible person" (e.g., Student Services Manager).

### **4.3. Administration Manager**

The Administration Manager is responsible for the distribution of Orientation Day information to potential students and APAC's higher education community via the website and other publications.

### **4.4. Staff**

APAC staff with expertise/knowledge in specific areas may also deliver different sections of the program (e.g., Chief Fire Safety Warden and Student Life Coach).

### **4.5. Students**

Commencing APAC students are responsible for ensuring their attendance at the scheduled orientation program. Students unable to attend the scheduled orientation program are expected to keep Student Services updated on their arrival to campus date.

## 5. Relevant Documents

- APAC Academic Calendar
- APAC Individual Orientation Checklist
- APAC Letter of Offer and Acceptance of Offer and Student Agreement – Domestic
- APAC Student Handbook
- APAC Written Agreement and Acceptance of Offer and Student Agreement - International
- Australian Performing Arts Conservatory Fee Schedule
- APAC Orientation Day Schedule
- Disability Standards for Education 2005
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018

## 6. Definitions

- **Course:** A single course leading to an Australian higher education award.
- **Course Entry Requirements:** The entry requirements that an applicant must satisfy to be admitted into a particular course, that are additional to the general entry requirements.
- **Domestic Student:** a student who is an Australian Citizen (including Australian citizens with dual citizenship), a New Zealand citizen, an Australian permanent resident, or holds an Australian permanent humanitarian visa.
- **International Student:** a student who holds an Australian student visa which provides approval to study in an APAC course.
- **Letter of Offer:** The offer of a place in a course to a successful applicant.
- **Reasonable Adjustment:** a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students.

## Version Control and Document Owner

<b>Policy Category</b>	Operational	<b>Approval Date</b>	09 December 2022	
<b>Document Owner</b>	Student Services Manager	<b>Approval Authority</b>	Chief Executive Officer	
<b>Audience</b>	Staff and Students	<b>Review Date</b>	November 2024	
Revision History				
Version	Author	Change Summary	Date Approved	Date Effective
1.0	CEO	New document.		
2.0	DVE Business Solutions Pty Ltd	Formatting, updating responsibilities and procedure.	09 December 2022	