



STUDENT HANDBOOK

2013



Mission Statement

As a college we aim to provide opportunities for enjoyable and effective English language learning in a safe, supportive and multicultural environment.

Encouraging individuals to reach their potential through communicative and flexible teaching and learning strategies.

Satisfying the diverse needs and expectations of all members of the college community in an environment of tolerance, caring, professionalism and regulatory compliance.

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Academic Advisory Board

ROLE

The role of the Academic Advisory Board (AAB) is to provide advice to the Board of Group Colleges Australia (GCA), appropriate to the academic activities of the company. This advice includes comment on curriculum design and content, course delivery, course assessment, and evaluation of courses. The AAB will also provide advice on strategic academic alliances useful to further the overall objectives of GCA. It may provide advice on the appointment of senior academic staff within GCA, or on any other academic matter raised by the Board of GCA.

The AAB is not accountable to the Board of GCA for the design and content of the curriculum, course delivery, course assessment and evaluation of courses, all of which are the responsibilities of paid staff of GCA.

Academic Misconduct

Cheating will not be tolerated. Cheating by whatever means results in a fail in that assessment/examination/test.

REPEAT OFFENDERS WILL BE EXPELLED

No student has the right to say they were not aware of the College policy on cheating.

Academic misconduct is where the student attempts to cheat or act dishonestly in any assessment, test, examination or essay that the student undertakes in order to successfully complete modules for a qualification for which they are enrolled. Students caught cheating will automatically fail. They will be issued with an academic misconduct letter via email, and they will be suspended for a period of no less than one week.

The Director of Studies will be informed, if not already aware, and the evidence confiscated or notes taken by the supervisor will be kept on the student file. This is so that if any further instances occur, appropriate action can be taken. Where more than one instance of cheating is noted, the College reserves the right to expel the student.

Academic Progress

DIAC (Department of Immigration and Citizenship)

It is a requirement for international students holding a visa to meet two primary requirements (there may be others):

1. Maintain a minimum of 80% attendance in each and every term of their study, **AND**
2. Maintain sufficient academic progress.

TRANSFERRING CLASSES

When you make sufficient academic progress, you will be moved up to the next level. Transfers occur based on your teacher's recommendation and when they feel you are ready for the next level. It is always best to study at the appropriate level for your proficiency/ language ability.

You should check your progress regularly by logging onto [MyGCA > Academic > Weekly Results](#)

Should you have any queries about your progress, please talk to your teacher.

Accommodation / Homestay

The College can organise homestays with reliable and friendly Australian families where you will have your own furnished rooms and meals provided.

It is the College's policy that students under the age of 18 years of age must be in a fully supervised accommodation arrangement. We can organise appropriate homestay and guardianship for our younger students if required.

See Also:

[**Accommodation for Students Under the Age of 18*](#)

Accommodation for Students Under 18

- The college must approve accommodation arrangements for all students under the age of 18.
- The college requires police clearance for the primary carer and all other residents over the age of 18 for each country lived in for more than 12 months in the past 10 years after the age of 16 at the place where the student resides.
- The primary carer where the student resides must be over 21 years of age and have the right to remain in Australia for the period that the student is under the age of 18 years of age.
- The college must approve the accommodation arrangement.
- The primary carer must agree to inspections of the property by the college as the college deems fit.
- The college has the right to request interviews with primary carers as required.
- The college retains the right to negotiate with guardian and/or parents to remove a student from accommodation that it deems unsuitable.
- The minimum length of residence at any one homestay is to be 6 months and/or equal to the length of the course enrolled in at Metro English College in order to provide a secure and stable environment for young students. If differences cause the relationship between student and homestay host to become irreparable, alternative accommodation arrangements can be organised through the college or guardian.
- Any unresolved problems or issues that arise during the accommodation period must be reported to Metro English College.
- Students must notify the college immediately if there are any changes to their accommodation arrangements.
- Any one host family is to have a maximum of three homestay students staying with them at any one time.
- Students are to be suitably supervised during their stay with the host family in a manner deemed appropriate by the college for the age of the student. Any queries regarding this policy may be forwarded to Metro English College for clarification.
- Host families are expected to make students feel part of the host family at all times and encourage students to participate in family events, outings etc.
- Host families are expected to provide leisure activities suitable for the age of students staying with them.
- Host families are to provide nutritionally balanced breakfasts and dinners for students every day. Lunches are also to be provided at weekends.
- Host families are to be deemed suitable by Metro English College (through agent or a homestay provider company) by undergoing an on-site inspection and interview.

- Host families agree to Metro English College's accommodation policies for students under the age of 18 before students arrive at the homestay.
- Although every precaution is taken, Metro College cannot guarantee the suitability of homestays and/or students. Any outstanding problems should be reported to the college immediately.
- All students under the age of 18 are appointed an Adviser (their teacher) at the college who can be approached with any inquiries or issues from the student or the homestay hosts. Students also have access to the College Counsellor.
- Agents of the College and Homestay Provider Companies understand, accept and follow these policies when arranging homestay.
- All students under the age of 18 are required to answer "Are you in a Homestay?" in the regular student surveys. If the answer is **no**, appropriate measures are to be taken to get the student immediately into a homestay.
- Group Colleges Australia monitors all homestays for its students. Group Colleges staff conducts regular unannounced inspections throughout the year to ensure that all under-age students are in a homestay and that the homestay situation is adequate. If the student is not home, a letter is left advising them of the inspection, and a follow-up inspection is performed.

Address of students

On the first day (Monday) you should bring your current address, phone number and that of an emergency contact (family member, homestay parents or friend) with you. During the on-line registration process, you will need to enter this information along with your personal details.

DIAC rules say that students **MUST** tell the college where they live in Sydney, their contact phone numbers and within 7 days if they change address. Students can change their details in their MyGCA account.

See also: [*Change of Address](#)

Anti-Discrimination and Sexual Discrimination

The College complies with the Anti Discrimination Act and the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984. Staff and students have the right to work and study in an environment free of sexual harassment and discrimination. It is the responsibility of staff and students to contribute to the achievement of a productive, safe and equitable study and work environment and to avoid practices that lead to or condone sexual harassment or discriminatory behaviour of any kind. Pornographic or offensive materials are banned on college premises. Any student found using the Internet to access pornographic material is automatically denied access to the computers for two weeks. Any subsequent breaches will be dealt with more harshly, and can lead to expulsion.

Assessment

All students are given a placement test when they arrive at the college on their first day. Students are then evaluated weekly via in-class assessment. Ongoing formal testing and student observations are regularly carried out.

Courses are reviewed via student surveys (every 3 months).

Assessment Appeals

If a student is not happy with his/her final results on their Certificate of Attainment, they must apply for an internal appeal through MyGCA.

If a student is unhappy with a Student Report or an in-class assessment result, they must first express their dissatisfaction to the teacher involved. The teacher will then negotiate the problem with them. If unresolved, the Director of Studies may be approached via email.

Director of Studies: brian.knight@gca.edu.au

Should a student dispute their level, a challenge test will be given and a decision based on the results will be made by the Director of Studies.

Attendance Policy and Appeals

Students are given a student card on their first day of class, which includes a photo and student ID number. The card has a magnetic strip on the back which is used to identify individual students for attendance purposes.

Every Metro classroom has an attendance scanner installed just inside the entrance. Students are required to swipe their student card at the beginning and end of **every** lesson. The system records the exact times that students entered and left the classroom, and attendance data is then uploaded daily to an oracle database. The percentage for classes attended is displayed in the student's account which is visible to parents, guardians and the student themselves.

Students are responsible for monitoring their own attendance and should check their attendance records in MyGCA **regularly**. If there are any discrepancies or errors, the teacher should be informed immediately so that the Head Teacher can be contacted in writing in order to rectify the problem. Students can check their attendance by clicking on *Attendance* in their student accounts. Weekly attendance information can be accessed from there.

In order to get attendance for a lesson, students must arrive in the first 15 minutes of the commencement time. They must swipe their student card in the scanner on the wall near to the door and then again at the end of every class.

DIAC requirements state that a student must maintain attendance above 80%, before Medical adjustments, for the length of their course. Metro recommends that students maintain near to 100% attendance to avoid any problems.

INSUFFICIENT ATTENDANCE

If a student's attendance for their course falls to 95%, a courtesy status email is sent to the student's email account notifying them of the percentage and reminding them of their attendance responsibilities. Respectively, these emails will also be sent at each of the 5% decrement levels of 90% and 85%.

If the student is under 18, their parents will be phoned and advised of the problem as part of the counselling process for the student.

The count of attendance emails sent for low course attendance is noted in the student's MyGCA account.

Where a student fails to maintain their attendance above 80% in any one course and it is no longer possible to attain the minimum 80% requirement, they will receive a '**Notice of Intention to Report**' email.

This email informs the student of the external and internal appeals process. Should a student wish to appeal the college's decision to report them to DIAC, they are entitled to access the internal complaints, grievance and appeals procedures as outlined below and on college noticeboards within 20 days of the receipt of the '**Notice of Intention to Report**' (see diagram on page 16).

A student may make an internal appeal in hard copy or by email. Emails should be sent to the Director of Studies (brian.knight@gca.edu.au). The email should state reasons for the student's low attendance and provide any supporting documents.

Please note that each party may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings.

Should a student's internal appeal be denied, the college will inform them via their student email account if they are currently enrolled (or by letter if they have finished their course) within 10 days of the appeal submission.

If you wish to lodge an external appeal or complain about this decision, you can contact the Overseas Students Ombudsman. The Overseas Students Ombudsman offers a free and independent service for overseas students who have a complaint or want to lodge an external appeal about a decision made by their private education or training provider.

Go to the Overseas Students Ombudsman website www.oso.gov.au, or phone 1300 362 072.

If a student's address is incorrect or the student has not notified the College of any change of address the student may not be aware of their non-compliance and may become an illegal citizen after the expiration of 28 days.

Attendance records (rolls) are kept for at least 7 years. The enrolment registers are maintained for a minimum of 7 years. Access to these records is through ISIS, the college administration system.

Students can, and should, regularly check their overall and weekly attendance by logging onto [MyGCA > attendance](#).

ABSENCE DUE TO ILLNESS - PROVISION OF MEDICAL CERTIFICATES

The college cites medical certificates and or other evidentiary documents supporting legitimate absences from school, and enters the dates the student was absent, and any other relevant information, into the attendance system. The attendance data is then shown in the form of attendance percentage, medical/other absence percentage and total overall attendance allowing for medical or other legitimate absences.

The college does not accept the genuineness, validity or otherwise of the

certificates. The college will input the dates and acknowledge those dates the student was absent.

The original medical certificate or supporting documents must be produced within fourteen (14) days of the student returning to college if the student requires that absence to be recorded.

The student must keep the original certificate, and is advised to do so, to provide to DIAC when required. The college does not maintain copies of the certificates.

ATTENDANCE - DEFERRED COURSES

In general it is not permitted to defer or alter the start date or end date of a course. Where a start date or end date needs to be altered this information will be reported to DIAC by the College with the reason. Metro English College makes no claims that this reason or the changes will be accepted by DIAC.

Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)

Click on this link to get information about the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship

<http://www.diac.gov.au/>

Certificates

For English Proficiency Certificates and Attendance Certificates, log on to your Student Account.

PROFICIENCY CERTIFICATE

When your English course is completed your teacher will give you your certificate on your final day or you can click *students* on the *MyGCA logo* > enter your *student number and password* > *academic* > *weekly results* > *proficiency certificate* and print the certificate.

ATTENDANCE CERTIFICATE

Attendance data is updated every evening. You can print a provisional certificate any time you like using the above method, but click on *attendance* > *attendance certificate*, then print. When your course is completed you can print a final certificate of attendance.

You will only receive your award if you have paid all your fees.

Change of Address

Change of address notification is provided through your student login account in MyGCA.

On the side bar on the left hand side, go to *Australian address* and enter your new contact details.

When you click on *save* your details are automatically changed in the administration system.

Please ensure the college has your current address at all times. The Department of Immigration stipulates that students are required to notify the college no later than 1 WEEK after they have changed address.

For more information about student visa regulations, visit Department of Immigration and Citizenship web site: www.diac.gov.au

Changing Agents

The college does not consider it good and fair practice for students to change their educational agency for 2nd and all further payments of any one course.

If however, a student has experienced a serious problem with the first agent and insists on changing agents we **MUST** have a letter signed by the original agent **AND** the student authorising us to do so.

When students **COMPLETE** their initial course, they can enrol in a second program with any other accredited agent they choose.

Class Sizes

English classes generally have a maximum of 18 students in them at any one time. If an English class is closed, students will be moved to the most appropriate class for their level of proficiency.

Code of Conduct and Rules

COLLEGE CODE OF CONDUCT

The Standard – Code of Conduct

- A. All members of the College should respect themselves, other members and property of the College.
- B. Each member of the College is entitled to an equal opportunity to all resources for their work and learning.
- C. Students are expected to maintain a reasonable standard of conduct at all times. This includes time spent on campus and time spent off campus on school related activities such as sport or excursions
- D. All members of the College are entitled to a safe learning and working environment free from racial discrimination, sexual harassment and occupational hazards.
- E. The College does not tolerate physical, verbal or emotional harassment from any member of the College community.
- F. Dangerous items such as knives, flammable substances and any other illegal weapons or substances are prohibited on College premises.
- G. Health laws prohibit smoking anywhere in public buildings.
- H. Health laws prohibit spitting in buildings and public places. Spitting is forbidden on campus.
- I. Alcohol and drugs are prohibited on campus. Students found with, or under the influence of any quantity of alcohol, drugs or any illegal substances on campus will be expelled.
- J. Students will be expelled if they engage in any criminal activity or behave in a manner to endanger the safety of any other student or a member of staff at the College.
- K. Students must act ethically and honestly at all times. Students found cheating during examinations or plagiarising assignments may be expelled.
- L. The College does not support a Discipline policy that includes corporal punishment. At no time will a student be physically punished for breaking any aspect of the Discipline code.

M. The College does not implicitly or explicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school

The College reserves the right to suspend or expel any student who in any way breaches the College Code of Conduct or any of the associated College rules.

Complaints and Grievances

If the student is unhappy they can:

- Talk directly with the person causing the grievance in order to resolve the problem
- Seek the assistance of their teacher
- Consult a counsellor for assistance
- Consult the Director of Studies (if appropriate) or Managing Director
- The college has an agreement in place with a mediator who is prepared to act as a last resort in cases where a grievance cannot be resolved within the institution through its internal processes.
- Seek external arbitration (Department of Fair Trading - see below)

This last situation would be in an extreme case and the College seeks to prevent these types of appeals by ensuring that students are satisfied with their program and outcomes.

Students may have a nominee act on their behalf.

In addition to their teaching expertise, staff are expected to be fair, courteous and helpful in all dealings with students. Any complaint about a staff member or program will be treated seriously, investigated thoroughly and dealt with according to the merit of the complaint.

KIND OF PROBLEM:	WHO TO TALK TO:
You do not understand your teacher's explanations	Your teacher
Your study progress, study problems, if you want to change class or continue your studies at University in Australia	Check your Academic Progress on the web site Director of Studies
Question about your visa; accommodation; Medibank; continuing studies in English, Business or Computing; payment of fees	Student services Check the web site
If you need a student card	Student Services Director of Studies/Head Teacher
If you have a problem that you would like to discuss in your own language	Talk to the Student Services Counsellor who speaks your language or an interpreter will be arranged for you

We always make sure that we try to solve your problems satisfactorily. If you are still unhappy with the result after discussing the matter with all of the above, you can contact the Department of Fair Trading by phoning them on 9895 0111, or you can go and see them personally at Level 21, Aetna House, 227 Elizabeth Street, Sydney 2000 or you can write to them at: Dept. of Fair Trading, PO Box 972, Parramatta, NSW 2124. Or visit their web site: www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au

Computer Labs

There are numerous PC labs on all floors for general usage plus one dedicated language lab for classes.

Rules for computer use

Students are not permitted to install or remove software on any Computer. Students are not allowed to attempt to gain entry into any casing or remove any devices such as mice, keyboards or monitors. The attachment of non-College supplied equipment to any network point is not allowed.

Any student who misuses any equipment or gains access to a computer for unlawful purposes, will be suspended from the College. The period of that suspension is to be determined by the Managing Director and the Director of Studies.

No food or drink is permitted in the computer labs or near any computers at any time, for any reason and students will be suspended from using the computers if attempts are made to do so.

Timetabled classes take precedence in the use of computer labs. The computer labs may be utilised at other times for general use. Computers should not be used during class time unless for a scheduled class activity.

Copyright Act

Metro English College complies with the relevant copyright legislation. Students are reminded that the use of copied printed material, software or other intellectual property must be undertaken in compliance with the Copyright Act. The College prohibits the use of any software where ownership cannot be proven and also prohibit the photocopying of any material which may infringe copyright laws. Photocopying any more than 10% of a document or book is against the law and heavy penalties may apply. Notices outlining legislation are posted near photocopying machines.

Also, check this web site: www.copyright.org.au

Counselling - Academic

Where a student is having problems with the academic level of a subject, he/she should talk to their teacher first. The teacher should provide help to the student

by way of additional study and/or practical material. If this does not provide the required outcome, the student should contact the Director of Studies by email to arrange an appointment (brian.knight@gca.edu.au).

Counselling - Personal

If a student is feeling distressed or upset, a teacher or staff member can be approached by the student. If the student does not wish to do this, they can talk to the Director of Studies who will then organise other forms of support or external counselling.

Course Details

Metro English College currently has the following course available to students:

Course Name	Duration (Wks)	CRICOS Code
English for Academic Purposes (Elementary to Advanced)	10-40	053379D
English for Academic Purposes (Intermediate to Advanced)	12-48	060266K
General English (Beginner to Advanced)	5-56	053380M
IELTS Preparation Program (Intermediate)	12	053381K
Preparation for First Certificate in English (Intermediate to Upper Intermediate)	12	069426D

For further information, contact Student Services on the ground floor or the Director of Studies: studentservices@gca.edu.au or brian.knight@gca.edu.au.

Deferment, suspension or cancellation of enrolment

In accordance with the National Code GCA, may defer, temporarily suspend or cancel the enrolment of a student on the grounds of:

- a) compassionate or compelling circumstances (for example, illness where a medical certificate states that the student is unable to attend classes);
- b) misbehaviour by the student;

- c) breach of **Clauses E to K inclusive** of the **GCA Code of Conduct** set out in Paragraph 9 below; and
- d) failure to pay the student fees by the scheduled due dates.

Consequences of deferment, suspension or cancellation of enrolment

- (a) If the provider does defer, suspend or cancel the enrolment it may affect the student visa;
- (b) The student has the right to access the College's internal complaints and appeals process within 20 working days of notification that he/she has been suspended or expelled;
- (c) The student may be excluded from classes during this 20 day period or any further period of the appeals process.

For full details see:

http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/ESOS/NationalCodeExplanatoryGuide/PartD/Standard_13.htm

Emergency

Ambulance, Fire and Police

Tel: **000** (24 hours a day)

English Language Proficiency Requirements

English language proficiency **at the specified level** is a requirement for entry into certain courses:

We recommend an overall band score of 5.5 in IELTS for entry into Central College and require an overall band score of 6.0 in IELTS for UBSS.

Whether or not the student reaches the required standard of English language proficiency may depend on the length of time during which the student attends the English language course at Metro English College.

ESOS Framework

A link to the DEST website for further information on the ESOS Framework – <http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/ESOS>

Evacuation Procedure

Evacuation Floor plans are posted in each room on each floor detailing how to leave the building. Each floor has a Floor Warden (Yellow Helmet) and a Deputy Floor Warden (Red Helmet) appointed.

BETWEEN 9AM AND 5PM

On hearing a **Beep...Beep...Beep ALARM** – secure items and wait for instructions On hearing a **Whoop...Whoop...Whoop ALARM** – follow instructions of Wardens and your Teacher and leave the building via the fire exits Assembly areas are marked on the Evacuation Plans – be familiar with them BEFORE a fire alarm goes off! **DO NOT USE LIFTS** Exterior Assembly (Corner of Gibbons & Redfern St): Behind Redfern station entrance opposite Redfern police station. Do not enter the building until the Fire Brigade declares it safe to do so.

BEFORE 9AM AND AFTER 5PM

On hearing a **Beep...Beep...Beep ALARM** – leave the building via the fire exits Assembly areas are marked on the Evacuation Plans – be familiar with them BEFORE a fire alarm goes off! **DO NOT USE LIFTS** Exterior Assembly (Corner of Gibbons & Redfern St): Behind Redfern station entrance opposite Redfern police station. Do not enter the building until the Fire Brigade declares it safe to do so.

Excursions

Students are taken on regular excursions every Wednesday by their teachers - both educational and recreational. This is an integral part of the curriculum and provides the students with the opportunity to practise their English and to experience the many attractions in Sydney. All students should attend.

Expulsion Policy

Metro English College reserves the right to expel any student who breaches the College Code of Conduct and its associated rules or the College Code of Academic Conduct.

A warning letter will be issued to any student who breaches the Code of Conduct. Copies of warning letters may be forwarded to parents / guardians / agents. In the case of repeated Academic misconduct e.g.: repeated cheating, the student will be expelled from the College.

The College does, however, retain the right to override the warning letter procedure for any serious breach of the College Code of Conduct and its associated rules.

Upon expulsion all tuition fees and any other monies paid to the college will be forfeited in full.

Upon expulsion students on a student visa will be reported to DIAC for discontinuing their course, and the reason will be shown as expulsion.

See Also:

- * [Academic Misconduct](#)
- * [Code of Conduct & Rules](#)
- * [Refund and Cancellation Policy](#)

Facilities

Classrooms

Most of your classes will take place on Level Three and Level Four of the building.

Computer Laboratories

There are six computer laboratories on Level Five, and many others throughout the college from Level Two to Six. You can use these facilities in your free time to prepare your assessments, check your college email account, or practise your English reading and writing skills.

Language Laboratory

This is located on Level Three of the building (Room 306). Please be advised that no **food or drink** may be taken into the computer labs.

Student Services

This section is on the ground floor of the building. You can talk to them for any questions that you have about being a student at Metro English College.

Student Lounge

This is located on the basement level of the building and has an area for you to prepare your lunch as well as many vending machines for snacks and noodles. There are two quiet study rooms with books and magazines which you are welcome to use at any time outside of scheduled classes

Staffroom

The staffroom is located on level 6. If you need to see your teachers, this is where they work when they are not teaching classes.

Financial Hardship

Students unable to pay their tuition fees on time for any reasons should discuss their problems with student services staff at reception on the ground floor.

See Also: [*Payment of Fees*](#)

First Aid

First Aid kits are located at reception on the ground floor, and the teacher's room on Level 6. Many of our staff are trained in First Aid. Please report all accidents.

Guardianship Policy

- Group Colleges is responsible for approving all guardians for students under the age of 18 unless the guardian is a eligible relative of student (eligibility specified by DIAC) who is over 21 years of age and has the right to remain in Australia for the period that the student is under the age of 18 years of age.
- Group Colleges requires police clearance for guardians for each country lived in for more than 12 months in the past 10 years after the age of 16 at the place where the student resides.
- A guardian must be over 21 years of age, be of good character and have the right to remain in Australia for the period that the student is under the age of 18 years of age.
- A guardian must permanently reside in Sydney
- A guardian must be able to communicate easily in English.
- A guardian must be easily contactable at any time.
- The guardian must agree to inspections of the property if the student resides with them.
- The college has the right to request interviews with guardians as required.
- The college retains the right to contact and arrange with parents alternative guardianship if the college deems the guardianship arrangements unsuitable.
- The guardian will be regularly contacted by the college and sent information regarding the student.
- Any unresolved problems or issues that arise during the guardianship must be reported to Group Colleges.
- Students must notify the college immediately if there are any changes to their accommodation or guardianship arrangements.
- Students are to be suitably supervised during their stay in Australia (please refer to the “*Accommodation for Students Under 18*” policy document)
- Agents of the College, parents, carers and guardians understand, accept and follow these policies when arranging guardianship.

See Also:

- * [Accommodation for Students Under 18](#)
- * [Guardianship and DIAC Regulations](#)
- * [Under 18 Year Old Students](#)

Guardianship and DIAC Regulations

GROUP COLLEGES AUSTRALIA COMMENTS REGARDING GUARDIANSHIPS

Changes to care arrangements for student visa applicants under 18 years of age: Public Interest Criterion 4012A and visa condition 8532 apply to student visa

applicants who have not turned 18 years of age and are not AusAID or Defence students (subclass 576).

Such applicants must either (a) reside in Australia with a parent, or a person who has custody of them, or a person nominated by either the parent or the person having custody of them, or (b) provide evidence that they will be going into care arrangements - for their accommodation, support and general welfare - approved by the education provider for the course in which they are enrolled.

GROUP COLLEGES AUSTRALIA COMMENTS

Group Colleges Australia will only give approval for guardians after Group Colleges Australia has received a copy of a Police check, the same as required for relatives of students.

The changes which are detailed below apply to applicants who will not be going into care arrangements approved by their education provider.

Group Colleges Australia provides Guardianship service for students at Group Colleges Australia.

Only a parent of the applicant or a person who has custody of the applicant will be allowed to nominate a carer for the applicant.

A person who has custody of the applicant is a person who has the right to have the daily care and control of the applicant and the right and responsibility to make decisions concerning their daily care and control.

The only persons who may be nominated as a carer by a parent or by a person who has custody of the applicant are a relative of the applicant who is at least 21 years old and who is of good character.

Previously, any person aged at least 18 years, including a non-relative, could be nominated as a carer. The carer must also have the right to remain in Australia for the period that the student is under 18 years of age.

A relative eligible to be nominated as a carer includes a brother, sister, step-parent, step-brother, step-sister, grandparent, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew, step-grandparent, step-aunt, step-uncle, step-niece or step-nephew.

To establish that a nominated carer is of good character, the applicant will be required to provide evidence of police clearance of the carer in the country or countries in which they have resided for more than 12 months in the past 10 years after the age of 16.

Details on how to obtain a police clearance are contained in form [47P Character Requirement: Police Certificates](#).

See Also:

- * [Accommodation for Students under 18](#)
- * [Guardianship Policy](#)
- * [Under 18 Year Old Students](#)

Guardianship for Students Under 18

The college is responsible for the organisation of safe and reliable guardianship for our under 18 year old students. Please refer to “*Guardianship*” policy above.

The college will act as the guardian to ensure students under the age of 18 are adequately housed in supervised arrangements and that they are provided with excellent pastoral care. You will need to sign the “*Guardian Payment Agreement*” if you want the college to act as Guardian.

If you have made other plans, we need to be satisfied that our students have suitable guardianship arrangements for the duration of their course at Group Colleges. You will be required to fill in this form and provide the college with police clearance for the guardian you have nominated.

Please note that the college will call all proposed guardians to arrange an in person interview to discuss the information provided below.

Health Services

If you need to see a doctor, you can look up the internet for a doctor close to your house. If you think you need to see a specialist, you still have to go to a General Practitioner (GP) first to get a referral.

If you are an overseas student, you will have to pay the doctor up front when you visit. You then take the receipt to a Medibank office and they will refund some of the money to you.

Medical Centres near Metro English College, Sydney

Health Services Australia

Level 8, 60-70 Elizabeth Street, Sydney.

Medical Examinations: Tel: 9232 5999

X-Ray Examinations: Tel: 9232 5999

Broadway Medical Centre

185-211 Broadway, Ultimo (Unilodge Building)
Tel: 9212 2733
Operating Hours: 8am – 6pm (Mon-Fri), 9am – 5pm (Sat)

UTS Student Medical Centre

Tower Building Level
6 Broadway
Tel: 9514 1197
Operating Hours: 8.30am-5pm (Mon-Fri)

Waterloo Medical Clinic

162/822 Bourke St,
Waterloo, 2017
Tel: 8399 0611

See Also:

[*Overseas Student Health Cover](#)

Holidays

Students must take their holidays during school breaks or between courses. The school is closed for 3 weeks at the end of the year for Christmas but is otherwise open Monday-Friday. Friday is Self-Access for General English and EAP students.

Students WILL NOT receive attendance for holidays. You must be able to maintain 80% including the time off for your holiday if you are on a student visa.

The college will not grant any holiday leave and will not issue any holiday approval letters for students on a student visa. It is up to the student to decide if they can afford to take a holiday.

Special leave for compassionate reasons will be considered, however, you will not receive attendance for this leave. Your reasons will be noted. DIAC may require evidence, such as Doctor's Certificates.

Courses will not be extended.

See Also: * [Attendance Policy and Appeals – Insufficient Attendance](#)

Human Resources Overview

Staff employed by the Colleges will meet national principles and standards, industry standards and program curricula. New staff undergo an induction process to familiarise them with the organisation, its goals and structure; introduce colleagues; identify other staff members; familiarise them with premises and equipment; instruct them regarding organisational principles and standards by providing them with a Teachers Handbook; instruct them in organisational processes and procedures; and inform them of their relevant responsibilities under the National Code, the ESOS Act and any relevant state requirements.

Immigration Laws Regarding Students and Visitors

It is the responsibility of all holders of visas entering Australia to become familiar with, understand and comply with their visa requirements. Students in particular should understand their work rights and study obligations. Not understanding these rights and obligations is no excuse and failure to comply may result in the student having to leave the country.

DIAC (Department of Immigration and
Citizenship) Sydney Office

26 Lee Street Sydney NSW 2000

Tel: 131 881

Operating Hours: 9am to 4pm (Mon-Fri), 9am – 3pm (Wed)

www.diac.gov.au

See Also:

- * [*Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship \(DIAC\)*](#)
- * [*Attendance Policy and Appeals*](#)
- * [*Change of Address*](#)
- * [*Accommodation For Students Under 18*](#)
- * [*Guardianship Policy*](#)
- * [*Overseas Student Health Cover*](#)

Justice of the Peace (JP)

The college has several JPs on its staff if you require documents witnessed for legal purposes.

James Manly	Student Services
Kathy Chen	Accounts Manager
Jenny McCarthy	General Manager
Alan Manly	Managing Director

Law

Metro College adheres to local, state and federal laws.

Students should become acquainted with their responsibilities under these laws as they are expected to abide by these laws.

Students should be aware of:

- Immigration laws regarding international students - www.DIAC.gov.au
- Anti Discrimination - www.hreoc.gov.au
- Sexual Harassment - www.hreoc.gov.au
- Privacy Act - www.privacy.gov.au
- Copyright Act - www.copyright.org.au
- Health Act - www.health.gov.au

Location

Metro College is located at GCA Tower 2, 1 Lawson Square, Redfern, right across the road from Redfern Station. The location provides many facilities and access to public transport.

Facilities in the area include:

- Restaurants
- Take-away food bars
- Retailers and shopping areas
- Sporting facilities
- Park

Lost Property

Any lost property found on college premises will be kept at reception for a period of 90 days after which it will be deemed abandoned.

Medical Certificates Policy

1. PREAMBLE

The New South Wales Medical Board receives numerous complaints from employers, insurers, the courts, etc regarding the quality, accuracy and truthfulness of sickness certificates. Doctors who deliberately issue a false, misleading or inaccurate certificate could face disciplinary action under the Medical Practice Act.

Doctors should consider the following points when a patient requests a sickness certificate.

2. GUIDELINES

2.1 The certificate should be legible, written on the doctor's letterhead and should not contain abbreviations or medical jargon.

2.2 The certificate should be based on facts known to the doctor. The certificate may include information provided by the patient but any medical statements must be based upon the doctor's own observations or must indicate the factual basis of those statements.

2.3 The certificate should:

- (a) indicate the date on which the examination took place
- (b) indicate the degree of incapacity of the patient (refer section 6 below)
- (c) indicate the date on which the doctor considers the patient is likely to be able to return to work
- (d) be addressed to the party requiring the certificate as evidence of illness eg employer, insurer, magistrate
- (e) indicate the date the Certificate was written and signed

2.4 The Certificate should only be issued in respect of an illness or injury observed by the doctor or reported by the patient and deemed to be true by the doctor.

2.5 A certificate may be issued by a doctor subsequent to a patient taking sick leave. However the certificate must:

- (a) state the date the Certificate was issued
- (b) cover the period during which the doctor believes the patient would have been unfit for work

2.6 When issuing a sickness certificate, doctors should consider whether or not an injured or partially incapacitated patient could return to work with altered duties. Arrangements regarding altered duties are matters for negotiation between the patient and the employer.

2.7 Patient rights to confidentiality must be respected; a diagnosis should not be included in a certificate without a patient's consent.¹

Patients may request doctors to withhold information regarding their diagnosis. In such cases it should be made clear to the patient that the information provided on the certificate may not be sufficient to attract sick leave and that an employer has the ultimate right to accept or to reject a certificate.

2.8 Signing a false certificate may result in the doctor facing a charge of fraud. Furthermore, the issuing of a deliberately false, inaccurate or misleading certificate may lead to a complaint of unsatisfactory professional conduct or professional misconduct under the Medical Practice Act.

Ref: Policy Committee meeting September 1997

Revised February 2005

1 Certain employers (eg state instrumentalities) insist on this information

For further information, please refer to the Medical Council of New South Wales website:

<http://www.mcnsw.org.au/page/old-policies/medical-certificates-policy/>

Medical Leave

The college will mark you as absent if you do not come to school due to sickness.

Metro College advises students to get medical certificates for periods not at school. Medical Certificates must contain a provider number to be valid. All registered doctors in Australia will have a provider number.

The college will sight medical certificates and enter the dates the student was absent into the attendance system. The attendance data is then shown in the form of attendance percentage, medical absence percentage and total overall attendance allowing for medical absences. The college does not accept the genuineness, validity or otherwise of the certificates. The college will input the dates and acknowledge those dates the student was absent.

The original medical certificate must be produced within fourteen (14) days of the student returning to college if the student requires that absence to be recorded. The student must keep the original certificate to provide to DIAC when required. The college does not maintain copies of the certificates. Keep your medical certificate as DIAC may want to see it (Your College Attendance PLUS your Medical Certificates should equal 80%).

Take your Attendance Certificate and your Doctor's Certificates to DIAC when you want to extend your visa. It is up to DIAC to take into account the student's attendance certificate and any evidence of any absences sufficient to satisfy DIAC of the student's eligibility for a visa.

MyGCA

MyGCA is a web based college administration system. It provides an easy on-line service from any computer around the world for all stages of an educational pathway, from initial inquiry, to enrolment and final graduation.

The main features of MyGCA are:

- student management
- financial management
- agents' management
- customer relationship management

Using MyGCA, students, agents, teachers, parents and institutions can access and manage student records 24hrs, 7 days.

To log onto MyGCA, students go to: <http://www.gca.edu.au/>, click on *students* and enter their student number and protected password and can check their attendance and test results anytime.

Orientation

Orientation for all new students is held every Monday from 9am – 12.45pm (approximately). This will familiarise you with college policies, rules, visa requirements and living in Sydney. It takes place in Room 306 on Level 3.

Your English language proficiency will also be tested and you will be placed in the class that best suits your language level. You will also complete registration and have a tour of the building.

You will receive your timetable on Tuesday morning and will need to come to school at 8.45am, and meet the Director of Studies on Level 3. If you are late for either your first day or on the Tuesday, you will need to see the Director of Studies to arrange a placement test.

Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

It is mandatory that all overseas students have health cover and the College recommends Medibank Private, although it is possible to take up other private health funds.

Student pays the OSHC fee, with enrolment and course fee (See your receipt) Student commences at the college on an intake day and the College then sends a batch of payments to Medibank (the organisation that runs the health insurance for Overseas Students).

In 2 to 4 weeks you will be notified of the arrival of your Medibank card via your student email account and it can then be collected from Student Services.

Medibank Private general inquiries Tel: 132331
www.medibank.com.au

Payment of Fees

You must pay your fees before you start your course and keep fees paid in advance. You will not be able to attend class, sit examinations or graduate if you have not paid your fees.

You can pay your fees by:

- Credit Card – there is a credit card surcharge levied on fees paid by credit card

See Also:

- * [Overseas Student Health Cover](#)
- * [Refund Calculation Policy](#)

Photocopying and Printing

Photocopying and printing facilities are provided for students to use on level 5.

The costs are 20c/B&W page and 50c/ colour page and students can add more credit using the EFTPOS swipe on Level 5 next to the printer.

Placement Tests

On your first day, after orientation you will be given a placement test covering the four skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking) to determine your proficiency level. This is to place you in the correct class for your English ability

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is deemed by the College as cheating.

Any plagiarism will result in a ZERO mark for that assignment. This includes the submission of assignments that are not the student's own work in their entirety where this is required.

See Also:

- * [Academic Misconduct](#)
- * [Assessment Appeals](#)
- * [Complaints and Grievances](#)
- * [Results/ Grades](#)

Police Station (nearest)

The closest police station is next door at
Tower 1, 1 Lawson Square, Redfern
Tel: 8503 5199

Emergency Tel: 000

VICTIMS OF CRIME – COUNSELLING

Tel: 9217 1000 Free Call: 1800 819 816

Privacy Act

Students are advised that their personal information may be provided to Commonwealth or State agencies and the Fund Manager of the College's Tuition Assurance Fund.

A student's financial and attendance status may be provided to the student's agent and parents of students.

In all aspects, Group Colleges Australia complies with the Federal Privacy

Act. The College will not give out personal details of any member of staff.

Students are advised that their personal information may be provided to Commonwealth or State agencies and the Fund Manager of the College's Tuition Assurance Fund. A student's Financial Status and Attendance details may be provided to the student's agent.

Refund and Cancellation Policy

For the purposes of this refund policy Group Colleges Australia (GCA) comprises Central College, Metro English College, AIWL and UIC.

(a) *Cancellation prior to commencement of any course*

Students who have **not** started any course with GCA and wish to cancel their enrolment must apply for a refund in writing. Applications for refunds must be addressed to:

General Manager, Group Colleges Australia
Locked Bag 7 Redfern, NSW 2016 Australia

Cancellation fees apply even if a course is not commenced, and are as follows:

- 10% of tuition fee for notice of more than 70 days - equivalent to a 90% refund
- 30% of tuition fee for notice of between 28 and 70 days - equivalent to a 70% refund
- 100% of tuition fee for notice of less than 28 days - no refund

A basic non-refundable enrolment fee will be charged

The refund will be made within four weeks of receipt of written notification.

If you enrol through an agent, any refund that might be payable will be paid through that agent. Where a student is unable to commence the course on time, the student (or agent) must contact the College to arrange another commencement date.

Exception

If a student visa is rejected by DIAC (Department Immigration and Citizenship) all paid tuition fees and overseas student health cover fees will be refunded in full upon proof of visa rejection. The enrolment fee and any other associated government fees and charges are **not** refundable if a visa is rejected.

(b) *Cancellation after commencement of any course*

No fees will be refunded after the commencement of any one of the courses in which the student has enrolled at Group Colleges Australia, even if the student has prepaid the entire course. This policy applies regardless of the reason for the cancellation and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- **NO REFUND** of fees will be granted in the event of cancellation, withdrawal or a decision to change providers or study plans, after the commencement of any one course or subsequent course in which the student has enrolled at GCA;
- **NO REFUND** will be given to any student who breaches their visa conditions or fails to meet course requirements;
- **NO REFUND** will be given to any student who is suspended and or expelled for breaching GCA rules and or the College's Code of Conduct;
- Tuition fees are not transferable to another student or another institution.

Exception

In the unlikely event that GCA is unable to deliver your course in full:

- you will be offered a refund of all the tuition money you have paid to date;
- The refund will be paid to you within 2 weeks of the day on which the course ceased being provided;
- Alternatively, you may be offered enrolment in a suitable alternative course by GCA at no extra cost to you;
- You have the right to choose whether you would prefer a full refund of tuition fees, or to accept a place in another course;
- If you choose placement in another course, we will ask you to sign a document to indicate you accept the placement;
- If GCA is unable to provide a refund or place you in an alternative course our Tuition Assurance Scheme (TAS) will place you in a suitable alternative course at no extra tuition fee cost to you;

- Finally if TAS cannot place you in a suitable alternative course, the ESOS Assurance Fund Manager will attempt to place you in a suitable alternative course; or
- If this is not possible, you will be eligible for a refund as calculated by the Fund Manager.

In accordance with the requirements of National Code 43, GCA acknowledges the right of a student to involve independent third parties for the resolution of disputes, including action under Australia's consumer protection laws. The registered provider's dispute resolution processes do not circumscribe the student's right to pursue other legal remedies.

See Also:

- * [Expulsion Policy](#)
- * [Complaints and Grievances](#)
- * [Payment of Fees](#)

Refund Calculation Policy

This policy describes the procedures for calculating and issuing a refund in conjunction with Group College's Refund Policy.

Persons responsible for administering refunds include Student Services Staff, Accounts Staff and Heads of School.

Refunds are given in the following situations:

1. where a student cancels their enrolment
2. where a visa application was rejected
3. where a student has to discontinue a course and a refund is negotiated on compassionate grounds.

Procedure

Students apply for a refund directly to Student Services.

The following procedures are followed:

1. Where a student cancels their enrolment

Students are advised to refer to the Refund Policy to see how much refund is owed. A cheque requisition is raised by Student Services and the letter advising Student Services of the cancellation is attached. This is sent to the accounts department. The refund is calculated in accordance with the Refund Policy.

2. Where a visa application was rejected

Students are advised to refer to the Refund Policy to see how much refund is owed. A cheque requisition is raised by Student Services and the visa rejection letter is attached. This is sent to the accounts department. The refund is calculated in accordance with the Refund Policy.

3. Where a student has to discontinue a course and a refund is negotiated on compassionate grounds.

This must be first approved by the Head of Department. Authenticated supporting documentation (e.g. A Death Certificate) is then attached to the cheque requisition raised by Student Services and sent to the accounts department. In this case, the amount of the refund is negotiated by the Head of School, but is in general equal to the amount of unused tuition fees. The student is advised of the amount to be refunded.

There are two situations:

- A. Where an agent has deducted commissions from the amount paid. The refund is paid directly to the agent. The student is given a statement of how the refund was calculated and how much they are due to receive. The student then goes to their agent to receive the refund.
- B. Where the fees were received directly from the student. The refund is paid directly to the student or to a bank account that the student nominates. The accounts staff will calculate the refund, and then remit the money together with a statement of how this was calculated.

Registration

All students must register online on MyGCA at the commencement of their course. Registration includes accepting the terms and conditions of the college and providing accurate contact and emergency contact details. Registration is completed on the Metro English College website during orientation.

Results / Grades

Students are graded according to language proficiency using Metro College's own band descriptors, which are modelled on IELTS band descriptors. The scale ranges from 0 (Non User) to 9 (Expert User). A copy of the band descriptors is available upon request from the Director of Studies or Head Teacher. A copy of band descriptors is also available online with your English results in your student account in MyGCA. To view your results log into [MyGCA > Academic > Results](#).

See Also:

- * [Academic Misconduct](#)
- * [Assessment Appeals](#)
- * [Complaints and Grievances](#)
- * [Plagiarism](#)

Security / Personal Belongings

Do not leave your belongings unattended. Beware of theft!

You can retrieve any lost property at reception.

See Also:

- * [Lost Property](#)

Self Access

Students are welcome to access the language lab and practice their pronunciation and listening skills on Fridays. Access to the room can be provided by the IT staff or the Head Teacher. This is optional and attendance is not given.

Sport Teams

FOOTBALL (SOCCER) TEAM

The GCA football team plays in the English Language Schools Association against other language schools at Queens Park, Bondi Junction every Friday afternoon, from April to August.

Contact Chris Harris (GCA Coach), chris.harris@gca.edu.au

Student Lounge

There is a student lounge for students to sit, relax and eat their lunch on the basement level. It is equipped with a kitchen, vending machines, ping pong table, piano, two quiet study rooms, and tables and chairs. There is also a TV with free Australian Channels and Foxtel.

This is the only place where food and drink are allowed. Please keep this space tidy and clean and make sure you throw away your rubbish. Remember, it's your student lounge so keep it clean.

Student Email

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION (Email)

GCA communicates with all students via the student email system.

Written notices regarding attendance or course progress (under Standard 10.6 and 11.6) are sent electronically to students via their student email account

Students are to direct all formal inquiries, complaints, disputes, requests etc. via email to the Director of Studies.

Students on student visas who have attendance that is below that required for their visa will be emailed warning letters to their student email account.

Students can access their email account by going to:
www.qca.edu.au and clicking on the *webmail* section at the top of the page.

Students log on using their student number and the password provided in orientation. Once you logon you will get a welcome message that asks you to change your password and setup the account. There is on-line help feature if you require any further assistance using your email account

Student Identification Cards

All new students are issued on enrolment with a photo identification card showing their student number. To have their card ready on their first day of class, students must have their photo taken during the orientation session. Student cards are then distributed by the Director of Studies the next morning before class. Students are required to carry their ID card at all times while on college premises.

You also need your student card to record your attendance in class.

Replacement cards cost \$20 each.

Student Input and Feedback

Student input and feedback is gathered formally (Student interviews at the end of each month and online student surveys quarterly) and informally, and is used to evaluate staff, College facilities and program effectiveness. These surveys are anonymous.

College management devises evaluation surveys for students and analyses the information collected to make decisions about academic issues, staff employment and training and College facilities.

Tax File Number

To get a Tax File Number you will need a Certificate of Enrolment from Metro College which you can print from your MyGCA account.

For Tax File Number Application Form go to this site: www.ato.gov.au

Taxation Office

The Australian Taxation Office
Podium Level
100 Market Street
Tel: 132 861
www.ato.gov.au

Timetables

English classes begin at 9am and finish at 3pm Monday-Thursday for Metro English College students. Self Access is offered to students on Fridays 9am to 3pm.

Students must study 20 hours per week if they are on a student visa.

You will be given your timetable on the Tuesday after you start. You can also see your timetable in your student account by logging onto MyGCA.

Transport

Public Transport (Buses, Trains, Monorail, Ferry)

Tel: 131500

www.131500.com.au

Taxis

Taxis are frequent in Sydney, look for a taxi that has its light on and flag it down by waving your hand. Taxis can be expensive; it is often worthwhile to ask the taxi driver approximately how much your journey will cost.

Tel: 133 300

Concession Cards

According to government regulations, international students are not eligible to apply for student travel concession cards.

Under 18 Year Old Students

If you are under the age of 18 years old, you need to make sure that you have adequate Guardianship and Accommodation arrangements.

See Also:

* [Accommodation for Students Under 18](#)

* [Guardianship Policy](#)

* [Guardianship and DIAC Regulations](#)

Websites

www.gca.edu.au

www.metrocollege.edu.au

Work

The Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) grants people on student visas to work up to **40 hours per fortnight** whilst their course is in session.

For more information, go to the DIAC website at: www.immi.gov.au

Work Health Safety (WHS) Policy

The purpose of this document is to outline the policy, procedures and responsibilities for WHS at Metro College.

Policy

Group Colleges Australia, and therefore Metro English College, has an WHS Committee who are responsible for ensuring that current WHS issues are monitored and observed through regular meetings held at least every 2 months and via a regular walk-a-round.

Procedure and Responsibilities:

1. The WHS convener for GCA is nominated by management and they are responsible for ensuring the following:
 - the WHS committee is created
 - the WHS committee meets at least once every two months
 - a walk around of the building is done on a regular basis and that the action items arising from the walk around are addressed by the appropriate persons
 - follow up on the items raised is undertaken
 - that a full scale fire practice emergency evacuation is done at least twice a year
 - That floor plan and emergency exit maps are visible in each classroom
 - That at all times there are employed staff with current First Aid Training
 - That the First Aid Kits are stocked with the appropriate items in appropriate quantities

- That Fire Wardens are equipped with the appropriate hard helmets and have undergone Fire Warden training
2. The following documents and forms for WHS are located on the M-drive under the Corporate folder
 - Accident and Hazard Report
 - College Risk Assessment Form
 - General Housekeeping Inspection Checklist
 - Manager Accident Analysis Report
 - Minutes of WHS meetings
 3. The Director of Studies of Metro College is responsible for ensuring that the orientation of all new SJC students includes a run through of the emergency evacuation procedure
 4. The Director of Studies of Metro College is responsible for ensuring that the student handbook contains a copy of the emergency evacuation procedures
 5. The Director of Studies is responsible for ensuring that staff and students are made aware that all WHS issues and accidents and injuries are reported to the appropriate people
 6. The Accident/Incident Forms are located in a red folder at reception on the ground floor and are to be filled in by the individual who was injured and a supervising teacher where relevant