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George Brown College
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Acceptance of Under 18 International Students Policy and Procedures

Name:	Acceptance of Under 18 International Students Policy and Procedures_v1.0
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Purpose
The purpose of this Policy and Procedure is to provide a framework for established principles and processes for George Brown College's (GBC's) provision of appropriate accommodation, support, and general welfare arrangements for international students who are under the age of 18.
This Policy seeks to ensure compliance with the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000, Standard 5 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, and which suits the needs of younger ELICOS students.

Scope:
This Policy and Procedure applies to:

- all international students aged under 18 years at their commencement date; and
- all arrangements for the accommodation, support, and welfare of such students for which the College has accepted approval responsibility under subclause 1(c) of the policy.

Definitions
For the purposes of this Policy and Procedures:

a) Course commencement- means the first day of the first teaching Period.
b) Nominated Welfare Period - means the nominated dates between which GBC has agreed in writing to assume responsibility for a student under the age of 18 who has neither a parent nor a suitable relative in Australia to care for him or her, as marked on the student's Under 18 Student Welfare Letter.
c) Registered Course - a course of education or training provided by GBC, for the ESOS Act 2000 and is registered on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS).
d) Student - means an international student under the age of 18 years old who is studying at GBC.
e) Study Period- a designated session.

1. ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE

GBC admits international students under the age of 18 at their commencement date if admissions officer is satisfied that:

a) the student will live in Australia with a parent or legal custodian;
b) the student will live in Australia with a relative over 21 years of age and of good character, who has been nominated by a parent or legal custodian and approved by the Department of Home Affairs (DHS or DHA as applicable); or
c) the student will live in Australia under accommodation, support, and welfare arrangements that have been approved by the College. Admissions Officer shall consider, on a case-

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by-case basis, accepting responsibility for the accommodation, support, and general welfare arrangements for students that are under the age of 18.

For the purposes of this policy:

a) a student may reside in Australia with a parent or legal Guardian who travels to Australia to provide welfare for the student for the duration of their study.
b) a student may reside in Australia with a suitable relative over 21 years of age who is approved by the student's parents or legal Guardians. This relative must be nominated as the student's guardian to the Department of Home Affairs on the appropriate form accompanying the application for a student visa. The relative should be:
    i. a grandparent, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew or a step-grandparent, step-brother, step-sister, step-aunt, step-uncle, step-niece or step-nephew; and
    ii. be of good character;
c) a student may also reside in Australia if their parents approve of GBC being responsible for their accommodation, support, and general welfare arrangements.

If GBC wishes to enroll international students under the age of 18 who are already in Australia, it shall inform the prospective students during the recruitment phase that they are required to have, and submit evidence of their welfare arrangements in place, which was required at the time that they lodge their student visa application.
If a student is undertaking a package of courses, the student must ensure that he or she has adequate welfare arrangements in place during any gap period between courses.

In the Application for Enrolment Form, students will be required to choose from the following Options:

Option 1
The student will reside and be cared for (until the end date on the eCoE or the day of the student's 18th birthday) with a parent/ guardian or a suitable relative who is over the age of 21 and of good character.

This arrangement must be approved by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) and will not require a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW) letter from GBC.

Option 2
The student will not be cared for while in Australia by a parent, guardian, or suitable nominated relative. At this stage, the college organizes accommodation with the Australian Homestay Hub and 2Stay providers. The student is responsible for any fees and costs associated with these arrangements.

This option will require GBC to provide a CAAW letter to the Department of Home Affairs as part of their visa application (see details below).

If students choose Option 2, they will follow the steps below:
STEP 1 - Choose one of our approved homestay providers. GBC Staff will then book and confirm accommodation and guardianship arrangements directly with the homestay provider.
STEP 2 – Submit the following documents to GBC Admissions Officer:

- International Students Under 18 Welfare Arrangement Form (COMPLETE OPTION 2 ON PAGE 1)
- Proof of confirmation by submitting the Homestay family profile.
- Legal custodian document (if applicable)

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STEP 3 - Once all of the requirements are met, the GBC Admissions Officer will send the student a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) and Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW) Letter to facilitate the application for their student visa. The nominated welfare period will commence at least seven calendar days prior to the commencement of the Course start date and will conclude seven days after the end date of the student's course, or the day on which the student turns 18, whichever date is earlier.

WELFARE REQUIREMENTS AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students must not enter Australia prior to the commencement of the nominated welfare period, or their visa may be subject to cancellation unless they are accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

Student welfare arrangements require students to:
• Engage in regular consultations with GBC Administration Officer
• Not change accommodation without approval from the College
• Contact the GBC Administration Officer in advance if students are unable to attend any of their regularlyscheduled meetings, and GBC will reschedule the meeting for another time within that same week or the following week.
• if students plan to sleep overnight at another residence or travel outside Sydney, they must Seek permission in writing from the College using the 'International Students Under 18 Overnight Accomoderation Form'.

• Notify a GBC Administration Officer to discuss any problems or issues that may arise relating to student accommodation and/or welfare arrangements.

NOTE: Should students fail to comply with the requirements, GBC is obligated to notify the Department of Home Affairs (DHA). By notifying the Department of Home Affairs, GBC is reporting a breachof student visa conditions. This report may result in a cancellation of the student visa.

REQUIRED AGREEMENTS

If the student requires College approved accommodation, support, and welfare arrangements

asreferred to in subclause 1(c), the student and their parent or legal custodian must enter and

provide evidence of the following arrangements:

a. A binding agreement with the student's accommodation provider; Students and their parents must fill in, complete, and return the 'International Student Under 18 Welfare Arrangement Form'.

b. A binding agreement with the student's College; sign and return the Offer letter of the College on or before the date of accepting the offer of admission to the course. If a student requires the College approved accommodation, support, and welfare arrangements referred to in subclause1(c), the student must accept the following terms and conditions, which will be detailed in the student's offer of admission:

<u>The student must agree to:</u>

a. Continue living in the approved accommodation until they are 18 years of age unless alternative accommodation is approved in writing by the College and a parent or legal custodian,

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b. Maintain one-to-one contact with their welfare provider, and attend regular phone and face-to-face meetings when required; and

c. Act responsibly, including being aware of their responsibilities under Australian law, and avoid illicit activities and risk-taking behavior.

The student must acknowledge that:

a. The College is not responsible for any fees and costs associated with their accommodation and welfare arrangements.

b. The College is not legally responsible for the student's actions whilst in Australia; and

c. The College is entitled to withdraw approval of the student's accommodation, support, and welfareif the student is found to have breached these terms and conditions.

d. A binding agreement with the student's accommodation provider must require the accommodation provider to meet the College's minimum standards for the relevant category of accommodation providers.

PROCEDURE:

This procedure:
a. meets the requirements of the Standard of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Standard 5); and
b. provides appropriate well-being and safety, accommodation, support, and welfare arrangements for students who are under 18 years of age.

On receipt of the completed agreement, GBC will record the parent/guardian or suitable relative's name, home address, email address, and contact phone number on the student's profile within the RTO- Manager, Student Management system. Where the student will be residing with a parent/guardian or suitable relative, GBC will proceed with finalizing the student's acceptance into their desired course.

GBC will provide students with an orientation and access to relevant information containing details on:
a) Who to contact in emergencies, including contact numbers of a nominated staff memberof GBC.
b) Seeking assistance and reporting any incident or allegation involving actual or alleged sexual, physical, or other abuse.
c) Inform the student of their visa obligation to maintain their current welfare arrangements until the transfer date or have alternate welfare arrangements approved or return to their home country until the new approved welfare arrangements take effect.
d) GBC undertakes surveys for improvement. Students will fill out an orientation survey after attending the orientation.
e) Students will also be provided Term surveys as they are studying in their allocated Courses. GBC Conducts regular term surveys every 6 months. Along with this survey, GBC will also use the 'Feedback on Homestay Provider Form' to ensure the overseas students are residing in appropriate accommodation.

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Complaints and appeals

Students may access the GBC Complaints Policy via the GBC website. GBC will continue providing welfare and accommodation arrangements to the student until the complaints and appeals process is finalized.

Where the complaints/appeal is related to welfare and accommodation services provided by a third-party, GBC will liaise with the third party to investigate and resolve any issues.

GBC accommodation requirements

1. If a student is going to be late arriving at their accommodation, they must inform theaccommodation provider and carer of their new arrival time and date.
2. Student is required to return every day to their approved accommodation before curfew.
3. If, for any reason, the student is late and will return to accommodation after curfew, thestudent must contact their welfare carer to advise them and request them to contact the accommodation provider.
4. The accommodation provider or homestay host will inform the carer if the student returnsto the accommodation after curfew or if they do not return to the accommodation.
overnight.
5. Student who breaches curfew can expect to be given a warning letter and asked toagree to a behavior contract. If the student continues to breach curfew, they may be suspended or excluded by GBC and reported to the Department of Home Affairs forbreach of their visa.
6. Students must not have visitors in their rooms without the permission of the accommodationprovider or homestay host.
7. Student must get their carer's permission before they will be allowed to be absent overnight or longer from their accommodation.

Where GBC agrees to accept responsibility for the student's accommodation, support, and welfare arrangements, the nominated GBC staff member will arrange for the student to be advised in writing and given a general outline of the accommodation and support arrangements that will be made for them. GBC will also direct the student to the information contained in this policy and to the procedures that the student must follow to ensure compliance with this policy.

The student's parents shall sign the acceptance of GBC's Guardianship section which is within the offer letter provided to the student, to acknowledge acceptance of the conditions required by GBC in accepting responsibility for the student's welfare.

GBC must ensure that when GBC staff raise an eCoE on PRISMS for a student for whom GBC has accepted responsibility for accommodation and welfare arrangements, they also notify DHA of GBC's role by raising a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation/Welfare Arrangements (CAAW) letter.

The CAAW must specify the start and end dates of the accommodation and welfare arrangements. Thestudent cannot enter Australia on their student visa until the welfare start date has been reached and this date must be carefully matched to the course commencement date and the time taken to travelfrom the home country.

The end date of the welfare arrangements will normally be advised as 7 days after the end date of the eCoE, or when the student has reached their 18th birthday if that is earlier.

Monitoring Homestay Accommodation

Where GBC agrees to accept responsibility for approving a student's welfare arrangements it will require the student to stay in GBC's approved homestay accommodation. GBC must ensure:

a. the good character of the homestay providers by obtaining working with children checks,

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personal interviews and verifying references.

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b. a good standard of homestay accommodation suitable for students, through home inspections undertaken by homestay providers.

c. GBC Staff will provide the homestay provider with the 'Initial and Regular Site Visit Checklist and Acknowledgement Form' to do this.

Students will also be required to meet with a nominated GBC staff member as often as he or she requires, but no less frequently than each month.
Students must live in GBC-approved homestay accommodation until 18 years of age and not change that accommodation unless a written agreement is obtained from the parent/ guardian or suitable resident.

The student must not spend a night away from the approved homestay address or undertake any travel that would require an overnight absence from the homestay address without first obtaining the relevant GBC staff member's written approval.

GBC will require the student to maintain a high standard of personal and social behavior throughout the homestay period, to conduct themselves responsibly, to refrain from risk-taking behavior, and to devote themselves properly to their studies.

Refusal to obey an instruction from the homestay provider or a GBC staff member to address deficiencies in the aspects of behavior and personal conduct referred to in the above clause will providegrounds for GBC to advise DHA that it has withdrawn its support for the accommodation and welfarearrangements. This may have implications for the student's visa.

GBC must also advise DHA as soon as possible using the specified PRISMS pro forma letter if the under-18-year-old student has changed his or her living arrangements or if GBCno longer approves of the arrangements for the student.

GBC may approve requests from students for alternative accommodation or welfare arrangements other than GBC's approved homestay where:

a. the student's parents or Guardian approve in writing of the alternative arrangements.

b. GBC is satisfied as to the good character of the adult(s) who are to be assigned guardianship of the student.

c. the accommodation has been inspected by a nominated GBC staff member and found to be suitable.

d. it is satisfied that the arrangements will provide accommodation and welfare arrangements at least equivalent to what could be obtained through GBC's approved homestay arrangement; and

e. the arrangement is secure and likely to last until the student completes their course or turns 18.

Changes to Student Welfare Arrangements Previously Agreed by GBC
A student is not permitted to change their agreed accommodation or welfare arrangements unless first approved by the relevant nominated GBC staff member.

Failure to comply with the above clause will be considered grounds for GBC to notify DHA of its 'withdrawal of approval of accommodation and welfare arrangements' which may have implications for the student's visa.

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DHA will be notified when the student changes accommodation and welfare arrangements with GBC's approval.

If a student refuses to maintain GBC's approved care arrangements, GBC will notify DHA using the Non-Approval of Appropriate Accommodation/Welfare Arrangements Letter in PRISMS which is likely to result in the cancellation of the student's visa.

If a student has gone missing from the approved accommodation and cannot be contacted, GBC will:

a) implement its documented Critical Incident Policy; and
b) if after a reasonable period, the student has not been found, GBC shall report the student's breach of visa condition to DHA, which is likely to result in the cancellation of the student's visa.

Non-Homestay Overnight Accommodation

Under-18 students who wish to stay overnight at an address other than their approved GBC homestay address, must submit the form International Students Under 18 Overnight Accommodation Consent Form to administration, at least 3 days before the request date, which has beensigned by their homestay parent, and parent/ guardian approving such accommodation. This form must also be approved by the nominated GBC staff member.

Transfer Provider Institution

An under-18 student seeking to transfer to another CRICOS registered provider must complete the Letter of Release Request Form and obtain parental/ guardian approval and the approval of the other institution provider if they are taking responsibility for the student's accommodation, welfare, and support arrangements. If the student is sponsored, the sponsor must also provide their written approval.

Termination Suspension or Cancellation

Where GBC terminates, suspends, or cancels the enrolment of a student under the age of 18, GBC will continue to check the suitability of care arrangements until:

a) the Nominated Welfare Period expires.
b) the student turns 18 years old.
c) the student is accepted by another registered provider who is willing to take on responsibility for approving the care arrangements.
d) the student leaves Australia or other suitable arrangements are made (e.g., the parent or other suitable relative takes ongoing responsibility for the student's accommodation and welfare);or
e) events have occurred that make it impossible for the provider to continue to approve the arrangements for the student.

Withdrawal of GBC's Approval

All reasonable efforts will be made by GBC to assist under-18 students with difficulties impacting their welfare arrangements.

GBC's approval for accommodation, welfare, and support will be withdrawn where GBC deems one or more of the following grounds have been met:

a) a student refuses to observe reasonable standards of behavior as outlined in the Student Handbook.
b) the student refuses to maintain GBC's approved homestay arrangements.
c) the student stays overnight at an address other than the approved homestay address, without parental/legal guardian and GBC's approval.

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d) the student's enrolment is canceled by GBC.

The student will be notified in writing of the grounds for the intended withdrawal of GBC-supported welfare arrangements by the nominated GBC staff. A copy will be forwarded to the student's parent/ guardian or suitable relative.

The student has a right to apply for an appeal for the decision to withdraw GBC's approval for accommodation within 10 working days of notification of the decision. The application for review is to be made using the GBC's Complaints and Appeals Form.
If the review outcome is unsuccessful, or the appeal form against the decision to withdraw GBC's approval for accommodation is not received within the time duration specified above, the student's parent/guardian or suitable relative will be notified that GBC is withdrawing approval for ac- accommodation, support, and welfare arrangements. Alternative welfare arrangements for the studentsby the above will be requested.

Where the ground for GBC's withdrawal of support is due to the student refusing to maintain GBC's homestay arrangements, GBC will complete the Non-Approval of Appropriate Accommodation/Welfare Arrangements letter on PRISMS. The provision of this letter signifies a breach of student visa conditions and is likely to result in visa cancellation.

Where the parent/guardian or suitable relative has provided written confirmation that they will be accepting responsibility for the student, the PRISMS Approval to Change Accommodation/Welfare Arrangements letter will be completed.

Requests from Under 18 Students:
Any requests to GBC from Under 18 students, such as refund, leave, cancellation, deferment or suspension, bonafide letters, transcripts, etc. must be signed by the student's legal guardian.
If an Under 18 student need to lodge a complaint, or appeal to a complaint raised by the College, such as academic assessment decision appeal, appeal towards unsuccessful course progress etc., or transfer to another provider, they must follow the GBC policies and procedures relevant to the above areas. Legal guardians must sign on the required forms When such requests are put through by Under 18 students.

Variations
GBC reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this policy from time to time.

Version	Approval date	Approved by	Approved by	Change
V1.0	**03 August 2023**	**General Manager**		

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