



STUDENT INFORMATION HANDBOOK

2009 -2010

**THE ASHMARK INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA
11/459 LT. COLLINS ST.,
MELBOURNE. VIC.3000**

INDEX

PAGE NO

1. Arrival Checklist	3
2. Code of Conduct	4
3. Classroom Expectations	6
4. Teaching and Learning	7
5. Satisfactory Course Progress	9
6. Fees	15
7. Fee Payment Policy	18
8. Refund Policy	21
9. Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation a Student's Enrolment	26
10. Student Visa Obligations and other matters	31
11. Attendance Policy	33
12. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)	39
13. Complaints and Appeals Process	42
14. Transfer and Release Policy	45
15. Releasing Documents to DIAC	48

1. Arrival Checklist

Registration and Enrolment

It is compulsory for students to finalise their enrolment by registering at the Little Collins Street Office before commencing their course. Students **MUST** bring with them their passport and CoE letter to the registration. For students who wish to have credits transferred from previous studies, they will need to bring their original documents to be sighted and photocopied for our records.

Also, please note that, if you have not enrolled in your course within 14 days of the commencement date indicated on your CoE, The Ashmark Institute of Australia (AIA) is required, by law, to cancel your CoE.

Please note that students are required to complete their address and emergency contact details and to inform the Institute of any changes, as it is a condition of the applicant's study visa to maintain their address details **AT ALL TIMES**. Failure to do so is a breach of one of the conditions of your student visa and can result in your visa's cancellation.

Class Times and Orientation

Class times at Ashmark Institute generally run from 8am to 7pm, 7 days a week. Students are scheduled to attend classes every week for their course. The class days varies from different courses, please find below for the exact class days for each courses:

Certificate III of Automotive Mechanical Technology [AUR30405] (20 hours)

- The first two (2) days, 8 hours each day
- The third (half) day, 4 hours

Diploma of Management [BSB51107] (20 hours)

- Two (2) days, 10 hours each day

Certificate III in ESL (Further Study) [20501VIC] (20 hours)

- Two (2) days, 10 hours each day

If there are changes, students will be informed with the changes on their scheduled class days at the time of their enrolment.

Orientation/induction is conducted on the first day of commencement. During Orientation, new students will be introduced to AIA staff, be fully informed of most aspects of life at The Ashmark Institute of Australia, provided with useful information on Melbourne and be given an opportunity to ask questions.

Should you have any queries concerning your application, please contact

The Head of Administration

The Ashmark Institute of Australia

Level 11, 459 Little Collins Street

Melbourne Victoria 3000

Australia

Phone: +61 3 9670 5155

Fax: +61 3 9670 1855

Email: admissions@ashmark.edu.au

Administration is open from 9am to 5pm (Australian Eastern Standard time) Monday to Friday.

2. Code Of Conduct

The Ashmark Institute of Australia respects the dignity of every individual. Accordingly, students coming to study at Ashmark Institute are required to behave with courtesy and respect towards all students and staff.

Equality

Australia is a country that believes in 'a fair go', meaning we believe in equal opportunity for all. Everyone in Australia, whether you are female or male, a professional or a blue collar worker, or have some kind of disability, are entitled to the same rights, services, social status, opportunities, respect and courtesy.

In Australia, a person's profession does not define their social ranking in the community. It is highly unacceptable to treat people in "non-professional" occupations as lesser people than those employed in a "professional job". It is also highly unacceptable to treat someone as their personal servant if they have been paid for a service. For example, when a student pays for their education in Australia it does not entitle the student to treat employees of the educational institution poorly, nor does it give them the privilege to demand special treatment from the employees. Treating everyone with courtesy, respect and equality is a

fundamental part of Australia's social culture, and there are laws against discrimination based on someone's:

- Race, colour, national or ethnic origin, nationality.
- Gender, lawful sexual activity, sexual preference, marital status, pregnancy or potential pregnancy, breastfeeding, status as a parent or carer.
- Religious or political belief or activity, industrial activity.
- Age, physical features, disability (past, present or imputed), medical condition/record.
- Personal association with someone identified by reference to any of the above.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is illegal and a violation of human rights under the Sex Discrimination Act 1984. Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcomed conduct of a sexual nature that offends, humiliates or intimidates a person, which can occur in the form of physical, verbal and/or written advances. Sexual harassment does not have to be recurring to be against the law. For example, sexual assault and indecent exposure which may only occur once are classed as sexual harassment and are also a criminal offence.

Students need to be aware that behaviour that may be acceptable in their country could be classified as sexual harassment in Australia. At AIA, we advise our students to be familiar with behaviours that are classed as sexual harassment.

For more information visit the Victorian Equal Opportunity Commission website at:

www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/Home.asp

What to do if you are being discriminated or sexually harassed?

At AIA, we provide trained staff for students with any discrimination or sexual harassment concerns or issues. We advise students who fall victim to discrimination or sexual harassment to keep a diary documenting the event(s), including the student's action in preventing further discrimination or sexual harassment

3. Classroom Expectations

- You must attend at least 80% of classes.
- You must come to class on time. If you are more than 15 minutes late, you will be marked as absent for the whole class.
- You must always ask your trainer/assessor for permission to leave the class no matter what the reason.
- If you are in the computer room doing your work during class time and you have no permission from your trainer/assessor to be there, you will be marked as absent for that lesson. Lesson time is not a time for you to be in the computer room doing your homework or setting your own study agenda.
- Mobile phones are not to be used in class. Students are not allowed to receive phone calls during training hours. Important messages are to be left at reception, which will then be passed onto you.
- If your address and other contact details change, you must inform The Ashmark Institute of Australia within 7 working days of your change of address.
- No eating or chewing of gum during class.
- No hats to be worn during class time.
- If you are going to be absent from Institute, please ring reception, so that the trainer/assessor can be informed. Flinders Lane campus reception phone number is:
03-96148363.
- You are expected to behave courteously and respectfully at all times towards staff and fellow students.
- All homework set by the trainer/assessor must be completed by the due date. If you cannot complete homework on time, you must see your trainer/assessor beforehand and request for an extension.

4. Teaching and Learning

It is important that all students maintain a high level of integrity in their studies. For this reason, The Ashmark Institute of Australia requires that students abide by all the rules relating to plagiarism, examinations and other matters affecting the integrity of student work. To assist you in understanding what is required of students, please read the information below.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the 'stealing' of words and/or ideas (intellectual property) from other writers including other students' work by not acknowledging the source of information through referencing, or the use quotation marks around the borrowed words. AIA will not tolerate plagiarism, so students need to be cautious in the use of wording, so that is not too similar to the original source.

When an author's idea is expressed succinctly and cannot be rephrased without altering its meaning, students may use the wording as a direct quote but will need to cite the expressed views. Students must be careful not to rely heavily on direct quotes to write up the majority of their essays, as trainer/assessor need to identify whether the student understands the subject matter in his/her own wording, rather than words from a book or article.

Avoid plagiarism

- When note-taking, record key ideas and information from source material in your own words.
- Record the source and page number of the information taken in your notes.
- Distinguish ideas of other writers from general knowledge and your own ideas in your notes.
- When note-taking, identify the author's purpose, evaluate the ideas presented and question these ideas to begin imposing your own understanding on the texts
- Develop your own writing style when writing up your essays to avoid copying sentences from the texts.
- Always follow referencing guidelines and models carefully. If you are unsure on what referencing guidelines to use, please ask your trainer for assistance.

The Ashmark Institute of Australia recognises that one of the biggest challenges facing international students whose first language isn't English is communicating knowledge in both written and oral English. However, students can improve their English proficiency by

immersing themselves into and being conscious of their surroundings. Below are some suggestions on how to improve your English:

- Watch and listen to English programs
- Participate in local activities or volunteer programs – this way, as people will depend upon you to get tasks done, you will be forced to understand and use English
- Read Australian newspapers and magazines
- Speak English at all times on campus

Student Expectations

- Assignments given may be very short and frequent, but students will be given advance notice to complete them.
- It is the student's responsibility to approach the trainer/assessor when experiencing any difficulties with their studies, as trainer/assessor cannot always be aware of each student's particular needs.
- Students may have to search for relevant material in a library to complete their assignments, as it is academically unacceptable to 'parrot' trainers' ideas
- Students are not only expected to memorise taught material, ask questions and analyse problems but, also, to think critically and formulate their own opinions on the subject matter to show that they have understood the information.
- Students will have to identify and take notes on the main points in classes and texts.
- Students will need to learn referencing skills (footnotes including references, bibliographies) to avoid plagiarism.

Study Guide

- Study in an environment devoid of distractions
- Manage your time wisely by establishing a study schedule and planning in advance
- Avoid delay in completing tasks
- Establish a good student-trainer relationship with your trainer/assessor
- Participate in group studies, as peers are often the best place for resource and support
- Do not be afraid to ask for help
- Prepare for exams in advance by regularly reviewing taught material
- Be aware of trainer/assessor's expectations of students
- Address the assessment criteria in assignments
- Turn up to classes and exams.

5. Satisfactory Course Progress Policy

A condition of your student visa is that you maintain satisfactory course progress.

Requirements for achieving satisfactory course progress?

The AIA's Satisfactory Course Progress Policy requires students to pass more than 50 percent of units over at least two consecutive semesters (a semester is approximately 18 weeks in duration). Hence, if you are doing 10 units over two successive semesters, you must pass at least 6 units.

If your course is less than two semesters (e.g. 10 weeks), course progress will be monitored over the entire study period and, if at the end of the course you have failed 50 percent or more of units, you will be deemed to have made unsatisfactory course progress.

Process for assessing satisfactory course progress?

Satisfactory course progress is based on the compulsory assessment tasks set for each unit. A student must pass all compulsory assessment tasks set for a unit.

For students who are studying for at least two successive semesters, unsatisfactory course progress will be determined at the end of the second semester on the basis of the number of units the student has failed during the two semesters.

For students who are studying less than two semesters, unsatisfactory course progress will be determined at the end of the course on the basis of the number of units the student has failed during the course.

Intervention procedure for students at risk of failing to achieve satisfactory course progress?

At a minimum, when it becomes apparent that a student has failed 50 percent or more of units in a given study period (a period not exceeding 6 months), AIA will implement its intervention strategy. The nature of the intervention strategy is determined by the needs of the individual student and may take a number of forms including:

- Ongoing discussions and student support sessions with the Head of the Department and/or the Student Support Officer

- Opportunity to do supplementary assessments or redo units, if they are available
- Academic skills development sessions

DEFINITIONS:

Academic performance relates to assessment of competency as the student progresses through the qualification. For the purposes of this policy/procedure unsatisfactory academic performance requiring the institute to report the student to DIAC is where a student has failed to/yet to achieve competence in a majority of units of competence undertaken in any two consecutive terms (18 weeks) of the qualification

PROCEDURE:

– Recording Student Academic Performance

The student's academic performance shall be recorded using the 'Student Academic Performance Record Sheet'. This spreadsheet will calculate the academic progress for the term, based on the total number of units that are required to be assessed and the outcome of these assessments.

All students shall be deemed 'Competent (C)' or 'Not Yet Competent (NYC)' for each unit within the qualification they are enrolled and complete. The assessment shall be conducted by qualified trainers / assessors using the RTO's assessment tools/methods and recording processes as required. All academic results are entered in to the Students Records Management System by the Overseas Representative Office in India.

It is the responsibility of the Student Results Administrator to ensure that the 'Student Academic Record Sheet' is also updated after each assessment is completed and recorded.

I.e. if there were 6 units in total assessed in a term (9 weeks) and a student has been assessed as 'C' in 4 units and 'NYC' in 2 units for the term, the student's academic progress would look like:

Term 1				
Student Name	Student No.	Number of Units Assessed 'Competent'	Number of Units Assessed 'Not Yet Competent'	Academic Performance Percentage (%)
John Smith	00123	4	2	66.67%

These records are checked regularly by the Head of Department for currency and accuracy.

– ***Monitoring Student Academic Performance***

The Student Support Officer will monitor student academic performance via the ‘Student Academic Performance Record Sheet’ (Excel/ Word spreadsheet) and report any issues, as outlined below, to the Director of Studies. This monitoring will occur one week before the end of the term and will be supported by the Student Support Officer who will also monitor the student’s academic progress regularly and will be involved in the student support and reporting process as outlined below.

At a convenient time, one week before the term (9 weeks) ends, the Student Support Officer will review the academic progress of all students and monitor the following points:

- ***Any student falls below 60% of the academic progress for the first term***

- Student’s shall be sent a Notification Letter indicating that they have fallen below 60% academic performance for the term, and failure to achieve competency in further units undertaken the current term may result in failing to achieve academic progress for the term. Failing to achieve this academic progression in two consecutive terms will be deemed in breach of visa requirements and will be reported to DIAC. The students are given the opportunity to be supported in their progress.

- ***When a student’s academic progress falls below 50% for the first term***

- When a student’s academic progress falls below 50% for the first term the Student Support Officer shall notify the Director of Studies and a ‘1st Warning Letter’ shall be sent indicating the student has to contact the Institute and organise an appointment with the Student Support Officer to discuss their poor academic progress and strategies to ensure that they stay above the 50% academic progress requirement for the following term.

If the student does not respond within 7 working days, the Student Support Officer will attempt to contact the student via telephone, registered mail to the student’s Australian residence or email. When this fails the matter shall be forwarded to the Director of Studies and a copy sent to the Campus Manager.

The Ashmark Institute of Australia will implement its intervention strategy after the First Warning Letter is issued and will monitor student's academic course progress during the second term.

- ***Any student who is below 75% academic progress in their current term after falling below 50% in their previous term***

- Student's shall be sent a '2nd Warning Letter' notifying them that they are at risk of breaching their requirement to maintain academic progression for each term they are enrolled. They are informed that they have fallen below 75% academic progress in the current term after falling below the required academic progression in the previous term. They are informed that if they fall below the required academic progression in two consecutive terms they will be reported to DIAC.

They are also informed that they are required to organise an appointment with the Director of Studies to discuss their poor academic progress and strategies to ensure they stay above the 50% academic requirement for the term.

If the student does not respond within 7 working days the matter is forwarded to the Student Support Officer who will then attempt to contact the student via telephone, registered mail to the student's Australian residence or email. When this method of contact fails the matter shall be forwarded to the Director of Studies and a copy sent to the Campus Manager

- ***When a student's academic progress falls below 50% for 2 consecutive terms***

- The student shall be sent a 'NIR' letter indicating they are going to be reported to DIAC for unsatisfactory academic progress in their course of study. They are informed that this has occurred as they have failed to be deemed competent in more than 50% for two consecutive terms. They are also informed of their ability to access the appeals and complaints process and have 20 working days to do so.

If the student does not go through any appeal or complaint process within 20 working days, the report shall be submitted via PRISMS.

– ***Intervention Strategies for students at risk for not achieving Satisfactory Academic Progress***

A student is deemed to be at risk when the student fails to achieve competency in at least 60% of the units being studied in a particular term.

Where a student is deemed to be at risk of not achieving a satisfactory course progress, intervention strategies shall be implemented to provide the student the opportunity to improve their progress. These intervention steps will include meeting with the student to identify the cause that is placing the student at risk. At this meeting, strategies to assist the student in completing the course within the expected duration shall be discussed and implemented as required. These strategies may include, but not limited to:

- Extra tuition and support to be organized
- Timetable adjustments
- Personal strategies to improve the students ability to complete the course requirements
- Opportunity to re-sit a unit
- Extension in duration of course
- Receiving individual student support
- Receiving assistance with personal issues which are influencing progress

The Director of Studies will meet with students identified as being at risk of not achieving a satisfactory academic progression and decide the intervention strategy most suited to the specific student's situation.

The steps involved in implementing the intervention strategy include:

- Interview with the student
- Development of an appropriate strategy
- Implementation of the strategy
- Monitoring and recording of the student's subsequent progress
- Warning letter if student is not progressing satisfactorily
- Further interview where necessary

The Ashmark Institute of Australia (thereafter known as AIA) may extend the course duration of a student's study for the following reasons:

- Implementation of AIA's intervention strategy for student's of not making satisfactory course progress
- If the student is not going to complete his/her course on time.
- Compassion of compelling circumstances, which include, but not limited to:
 - Serious illness or injury, where a medical certificates states that the student was unable to attend classes;
 - Bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents;
 - Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel when this has impacted on the student's studies;
 - Traumatic experience which could include:
 - Involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident;
 - Witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime.
 - AIA was unable to provide or offer pre-requisite unit; or
 - Inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa

– **Reporting 'Breach of Student Academic Progress'**

All students who fall below 50% academic progress requirement for two consecutive terms and have no supporting reasons shall be reported via PRISMS to DIAC for a breach of their visa condition.

Students have 20 working days from the date the 'NIR' letter is processed to appeal the decision of their academic non-performance. If they do not choose to use this option or the appeal is unsuccessful, then the breach of visa conditions shall be reported as indicated.

This process of reporting breaches via PRISMS is the responsibility of the PRISMS Administrator.

When a student does not access the complaints and appeals process within 20 working days, or an appeal is unsuccessful, a S.20 Form is completed on PRISMS and a copy of this form shall be printed and sent to the student notifying them of the reported breach. A

copies of all letters, details of phone calls made, and any reports are to be kept in the student files.

6. Fees

7(a) Additional Fees and Charges

1. Re-assessment Fee

a) Automotive

NA - AUD\$150

NYC - AUD\$100

NAW, NAT – Supplementary Assessment

>90% attendance – No Charge on Any Re-assessment

b) Business Management

NYC (NYC1, NYC2, NYC3, NYC4, & NYC5)

- Up to total AUD\$500 plus AUD\$50 Administration fee
- AUD\$100 per Assessment

2. Student ID Card

Enrolment for 2 years or 1 year – No Charge

Extension of 1 year enrolment into 2nd year - AUD\$20 Fee

Replacement card charge - AUD\$20

3. Payment by Instalment Fees

AUD\$50 payable with each of the 2nd and 3rd installment payments

4. Weekend Classes

Weekend classes are only available now if vacancy in the group occurs

- AUD \$500 Fee applies for attending weekend classes

5. Late payment of Fees

- a. Fine of AUD \$20 per day applies to maximum of 14 days– refer www.ashmark.edu.au
- b. Fine of AUD \$600 – applies at 14 days after initial due date (commencement of semester) refer www.ashmark.edu.au and includes the fee accumulated at the daily rate.

6. Deferment Charges and Conditions

- Deferment for maximum of 6 months
- Ashmark accepts no liability for fees while student absent
- Students must still complete Units by end of CoE for study period
- Re-assessment fees will apply

7. Non-attendance at Enrolment Day

- AUD \$100 Fee applies
- If prior arrangement made regarding non-attendance and extension letter supplied, then AUD \$100 fee for re-issuing CoE applies.

8. Re-issuing Certificates or other academic documents

- Statutory Declaration to be tendered
- AUD \$50 fee for each document requested

9. Charges for damage or loss of Ashmark property

Students liable for replacement cost of any AIA property due to misuse or inappropriate activity.

7(b). Resources Fees

1. AUR30405 Certificate III in Automotive Mechanical Technology

- First Semester Fee: AUD\$400
- Second semester Fee: AUD\$200

2. BSB51107 Diploma of Management

- First Semester Fee: AUD\$400
- Second Semester Fee: AUD\$200

3. 21939VIC Certificate III in ESL (Further Study)

All Courses: AUD\$120

7(c). Other Issues

Workshop clothing

Students must wear overalls and boots supplied by AIA

7. Fee Payment Policy

1) If not paying in instalments, when are my fees due?

1.1 Students must pay tuition fees **before** the start of a new semester. If not paid by the due date, fines up to a maximum of \$600 will apply (see below for more details).

2) When will Ashmark Institute notify you of fees due?

2.1 Invoices indicating fees due for the next semester will be issued to you no later than 4 weeks before the end of the semester in which you are enrolled. For example, if you are currently studying in Semester 1, at least four weeks before semester 1 ends, you will be issued with an invoice for semester 2. The invoice will also indicate your intake date (that is, in which term you commenced your course).

3) How will invoices be distributed?

3.1 Invoices will be distributed to you by mail.

Please note: If you change your address, it is a part of your student visa conditions to notify the Institute of this change within 7 days.

It is the **responsibility** of the student to obtain advice regarding the due date.

3.2 If you have not received your invoice, please go to the Little Collins St Campus reception desk to immediately collect a copy.

4) Penalties for not applying fees:

4.1 STAGE 1: Issuing of First Warning Letter for Non-Payment of Fees

4.1.1. IF:

- 1) You have not applied to pay in instalments and you have not paid your full semester fees by the due date; or
- 2) You have applied for and been allowed to pay in instalments but you have not paid an initial deposit or instalment by the due date,

You will be issued a First Warning letter. You have **7 days** from the issue date indicated on the letter within which to pay your outstanding fees.

4.1.2. Further, you will be fined AUD\$20/day up to a maximum of **14** days. Fines accrued must be paid at the same time fee payment is made.

4.2 STAGE 2: Issuing of Final Warning Letter for Non-Payment of Fees

4.2.1. The Final Warning letter will be issued on the first working day after the deadline indicated in the First Warning letter. If outstanding fees are still not received within 7 days of the issue date of the Final Warning letter, a fine of AUD\$600 is payable (this fine includes the fine accrued at Point 4.1.2 above).

4.3 STAGE 3: Notification of Intention to Report to DIAC for Non-Payment of Fees

4.3.1. If fees are not paid within the 7 day period indicated in the Final Warning letter (see Stage 2 above) and, if the student has not contacted the school and made other arrangements for payment, the student will be issued with a Notification of Intention to Report to DIAC letter for non-payment of fees.

4.3.2. On receiving the Notification of Intention to Report to DIAC for non-payment of fees, the student will have 20 working days within which to appeal Ashmark Institute's intention to report the student to DIAC for non-payment of fees (ref. Complaints and Appeals Process for more details).

5) Paying fees in instalments

5.1 If paying in instalments, what should I do?

All applications to be made to the Student Accounts Officer within **5 working days prior to the start of the semester**, after which no instalment application will be accepted.

5.2 How many instalments may I pay?

5.2.1. If you wish to pay in instalments, you must pay an initial **deposit** and the remainder can be paid in **two instalments**. Payments are to be made as follows:

- 1) **Deposit**: Minimum deposit payable before the start of the semester is AUD**\$2,500**.
- 2) **Instalment 1**: to be paid within 4 weeks of the Deposit's due date.
- 3) **Instalment 2**: to be paid within 4 week's of Instalment 1's due date.

5.2.2. Students must pay their entire fees within **8 weeks** of their semester start date. This only applies to those students whose application for payment by instalments has been approved.

5.2.3. Once an instalment application has been approved, you will receive a copy of the application for your personal record.

6) Receipts

6.1. I receive a receipt indicating how much I have paid?

6.1.1. Each time you pay for your fees, you will receive a receipt indicating how much you have paid to date and how much you are still owing on your semester's fees.

8. Refund Policy

Introduction

AIA's policy on the refund of tuition fees and other course money for international students has been developed in accordance with the ESOS Act 2000, ESOS Regulations 2001 and the National Code 2007. This policy applies equally to all new and re-enrolling students unless otherwise stated.

Refund if AIA defaults:

The Ashmark Institute of Australia (thereafter known as AIA) agrees to refund full tuition fees in Australia dollars (AUD\$) to the original fee paying party as soon as is practicable but no longer than 2 weeks from the date of refund application received if:

- The course does not start on the agreed starting date which is notified in the Offer Letter and Agreement
- The course stops being provided after it starts and before it is completed
- The course is not provided fully because The Ashmark Institute of Australia has a sanction imposed by a government regulator
- If the course ceases, refunds will be granted in accordance with the provision of ESOS Act 2000 and the ESOS Regulation 2001

Refund if students defaults:

There will not be any refunds in case of the student defaults:

- The student withdraws from the course (either before or after the agreed starting day) if granted visa
- The student breaches a condition of his or her student visa; or
- Misbehavior by the student.

Please note: The Ashmark Institute of Australia may arrange for another course, or part of a course, to be provided to students at no (extra) cost to the student as an alternative to refunding course money. Where the student agrees to this arrangement, The Ashmark Institute of Australia will not be liable to refund the money owed for the original enrolment.

This policy on the refund of tuition fees constitutes a written agreement between AIA and the international student for the purposes of ESOS Act 2000, ESOS Regulations 2001 and

the National Code 2007. This agreement is formed when a student delivers his or her acceptance form and program deposit.

Amounts below include any course money collected by education agents on behalf of The Ashmark Institute of Australia	
Application Fee	Non-refundable
Received an offer letter but the e-COE is not granted	Full refund
Visa refused prior to course commencement	Full refund, less AUD\$250 (application fee) and lesser of 5% of course money received to date
Withdrawal at least 10 weeks prior to agreed start date	Full refund, less AUD\$250 (application fee) and lesser of 5% of course money received to date
Withdrawal less than 10 weeks prior to agreed start date where visa is refused	Full refund, less AUD\$250 (application fee) and lesser of 5% of course money received to date
Withdrawal after the agreed start date where the visa is not refused	No refund
Provider unable to provide course to student	Full refund and less AUD\$250 (application fee)
Withdrawal from study - current students	No refund
Airport pick-up	Non-refundable
Homestay fees and accommodation booking fee	Non-refundable

All applications for refund must be made in writing using the Fees Refund Application Form and submitted to the Head of Accounts/Finance within the refund application period as prescribed in this policy. A refund will be paid directly to the person who entered into the agreement with The Ashmark Institute of Australia.

This agreement, and the availability of complaints and appeals processes, does not remove the right of the student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

Refunds of fees paid, less deductions provided for in this policy, will be made, if students apply in writing to the Head of Accounts/Finance Manager within the refund application period, as prescribed in this policy.

1. International students seeking a refund while "in Australia" must complete and submit the Application for Refund Form, available from AIA. Appropriate supporting documentation needs to be included e.g. evidence of arrangements for departure from Australia, acceptance into another program of study, etc.

2. International students seeking a refund while “outside Australia” must complete and submit the application to the Overseas Representative Office in India by the agent or the student. They must include in their refund request letter, their contact details, the reason why did they request for a refund, and the name of the person to whom the refund is to be made with payment details. Appropriate supporting evidence must be provided with the letter.

In order for a refund to be payable, the funds must be available (e.g. cheques are cleared, telegraphic transfers received), and any debts to AIA must be paid in full or the outstanding amounts will be deducted from the refund. The refund must be made to the same person or body from whom the payment was received on behalf of the student.

Refunds will be made to the person who entered into the contract within 4 weeks of receipt of a written application and will include a statement explaining how the refund was calculated. In the case of provider default the refund will be paid within 2 weeks (section 27 ESOS Act 2000) from the date that application received.

AIA reserves the right to retain the amount of any agent fee incurred by AIA in recruiting a student, in addition to any other amount AIA is entitled to.

Full Refund of Pre-Paid Fees for Studies Not Undertaken

A refund of any pre-paid fees will be provided in the following circumstances:

- The course in which the student is enrolled does not start on the agreed starting date indicated in the offer letter; or
- The course stops being provided to student after it starts and before it is completed; or
- The course is not provided fully to the student because the Institute has a sanction imposed by the government regulator; or
- If the student’s application for a student visa is refused such that the student cannot undertake studies in Australia, a refund of course fees received by the Institute less AUD\$250 application fee and lesser of 5% of course money received to date will be granted. The student must provide proof of refusal from the Australian Government or else a refund will not be granted; or
- If the student’s application for student visa is refused within less than 10 weeks prior to the student’s course commencement date, a refund of course fees received by the

Institute less AUD\$250 application fee and lesser of 5% of course money received to date will be issued to student. The student must provide proof of refusal from the Australian Government or else a refund will not be granted; or

- If 10 weeks or more prior to the student's course commencement date, the student indicates to the Institute, in writing, that he or she wishes to withdraw from the course, a refund of course fees received by the Institute less AUD\$250 application fee and lesser of 5% of course money received to date will be granted.

Please note, in all of the above cases, course commencement date is taken to mean the date indicated on the student's most current CoE.

No Refunds

No refund will be provided in the following circumstances, except where the visa is refused:

- If the student notifies The Ashmark Institute of Australia less than 10 weeks prior to the student's course commencement date that he or she wishes to withdraw from the course; or
- If the student notifies The Ashmark Institute of Australia on or after the commencement date that he or she wishes to withdraw from the course; or
- If the student defaults either before or after the commencement of his or her course.
Student default occurs when:
 - The student does not commence the course on the date specified in the student's CoE and does not notify the Institute; or
 - The student fails to pay an amount he or she was liable to pay to AIA, directly or indirectly; or
 - The student breaches a condition of his or her student visa; or
 - If, after deferring, a student gives written notice that they do not intend to take up their deferred place.
- A student cancels his or her enrolment and requests a refund, which includes all monies paid to AIA for Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC), airport reception and accommodation assistance fees.
- A student abandons his or her course without formally cancelling his or her enrolment with AIA. However, the balance of all fees due will be invoiced to the student.

- Where a student has received a packaged offer for a combination of programs, and does not enrol in the second or subsequent program, the deposit paid for those programs shall be retained by AIA.

AIA reserves the right to retain the full fee paid where an offer was made on the basis of fraudulent documents.

Deferral of Studies

Students who wish to defer their program commencement date must notify AIA in writing prior to the program commencement date. An Amendment Offer will be issued advising the student of their new program commencement date. A place may only be deferred for up to 6 calendar months.

Where a program deferral is granted, any monies paid to accept the original program will be transferred as a deposit for the deferred program.

Grievance Procedure

Students who believe they have been charged an incorrect fee or given an incorrect refund are entitled to dispute the decision using The Ashmark Institute of Australia's Complaints & Appeals procedure.

Any appeal regarding decisions relating to this policy should be lodged in writing with AIA within 10 working days of the student receiving the original decision from AIA. Written appeals should be addressed to the Head of Administration.

This agreement, and the availability of complaints and appeals processes, does not remove the right of the student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

The Ashmark Institute of Australia's Complaints & Appeals procedure does not circumscribe the student's right to pursue other legal remedies.

9. Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation a Student's Enrolment

Definition of terms:

Cancelling a student's enrolment means that the student is formally no longer a student of Ashmark Institute. Cancelling a student's becomes official once DEST, via PRISMS, is notified that the student's enrolment with Ashmark Institute has been cancelled.

Deferring or suspending studies means to temporarily delay or postpone studies. A deferment or suspension of studies can be initiated by either AIA or the student. A deferment or suspension of studies becomes official once DEST, via PRISMS, is notified that the student's enrolment with Ashmark Institute has been suspended or deferred.

Students may apply for a temporary deferment or suspension of studies. All temporary suspensions, regardless of their duration, must be reported to DEEWR.

It is important to keep in mind that should you apply for a deferment or suspension of studies, this may affect your course completion date which in turn may affect your student visa. Therefore, students planning to **defer, suspend or cancel their enrolment** are advised to contact DIAC on 131 881 for further information.

On what grounds may a student apply for a deferment or suspension of studies?

The prospective students should find this information on the student's handbook, which also can be found on the website. Students wishing to defer or temporarily suspend their studies can only do so when there are genuinely compelling or compassionate circumstances. Compelling or compassionate circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- a) Serious injury or illness where the medical certificate states the student was unable to attend classes – please note, that backdated medical certificates are generally not accepted as evidence.
- b) Bereavement or serious illness of a close family member (where possible, a death certificate needs to be provided)
- c) Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the student's studies;
- d) A traumatic experience such as being involved in a serious crime or accident. All such cases need to be supported by police or psychologists' reports.

- e) Where AIA was unable to offer a requisite unit
- f) A student did not receive a visa in time to commence studies on the due date.

Please note: Even if medical or other certificates are provided, the student cannot be guaranteed a suspension or deferment of studies. AIA will use its professional judgement to assess each case on its individual merits.

How to apply for a deferment or suspension of studies?

Students must submit the Deferment or Temporary Suspension of Studies Form (available from Reception) at least 10 working days prior to the start of the suspension period for which the student is applying. In exceptional cases, such as the death of a family member, this 10 working days period may be waived.

Together with the application form, the student needs to provide documentary evidence in support of the application. Documents may include, for example:

- A police report
- Medical certificates that clearly indicate the period during which the student is unable to attend classes. Generally, medical certificates without such evidence will not be accepted as proof that the student is unable to attend classes.
- Return air flight tickets to one's home country

AIA will process the application within **10 working days**. Should the application be refused, AIA will provide written reasons for its decision. A copy of AIA's response will be kept in the student's file.

Additional important information:

Students should keep in mind that, unless they have been granted, in writing, a formal approval to suspend studies, airline tickets should not be pre-purchased, as AIA cannot guarantee that the student will be successful in his or her application for a suspension.

On what grounds may AIA initiate a cancellation or suspension of a student's studies?

AIA reserves the right to cancel or temporarily suspend a student's enrolment on the basis of:

1. Student misbehaviour, examples of which include, but are not limited to, behaviour which:
 1. seriously disrupts a class.
 2. could potentially bring AIA into disrepute
 3. poses a serious threat to the student's, other students' or staff health, safety or welfare
 4. is dishonest, including theft of AIA, staff or student property
 5. shows great disrespect towards staff or students
 6. is academically unethical such as engaging in plagiarism, cheating or other inappropriate behaviour
 7. demonstrates a wilful misuse or damage of AIA property or facilities
2. Compelling reasons relating to the welfare of the student and/or other members of the Institute community. For example, if a student has a contagious disease and refuses to take leave, AIA may be forced to suspend the student's studies, so as to protect the Institute community.

Are there any other grounds on which AIA may initiate a cancellation of a student's studies?

1. Non-payment of fees
2. Unsatisfactory attendance
3. Unsatisfactory course progress
4. The student is due commence studies but has not arrived in Australia nor contacted the Institute within 2 weeks of the semester's commencement date to explain the reason for his or her non-commencement of studies.
5. The student has not returned from semester break **and** has not paid the next semester's fees **and** has not contacted AIA within **2 weeks** of the semester's

commencement date to explain the reason for his or her non-commencement of studies. In this case, **no NIR letter** will be issued, as the Institute has assumed that the student, by not paying his or her fees and not contacting AIA, has indicated “inactively” that he or she will not be continuing with his or her studies.

If The Ashmark Institute of Australia initiates a cancellation or suspension of a student’s studies, what process will the Institute follow?

WARNING LETTER: In cases relating to attendance, course progress, or non-payment of fees, warning letters will be sent to the student’s residential Australian address (please refer to *Attendance Policy*, *Course Progress Policy* and *Fee Payment Policies* for specific details on when and how warning letters are issued).

Warning letters will not be issued in compelling circumstances requiring the immediate removal of the student’s presence from campus (e.g. where the student has a contagious disease that poses a serious threat to other persons).

NIR LETTER: Before taking the final step to cancel or suspend a student’s enrolment, the student will be sent a Notification of Intention to Report (NIR) letter to his or her Australian residence and given 20 working days within which to appeal the Institute’s intention to cancel the student’s enrolment.

An NIR letter will not be issued in circumstances covered by Point 5 above or where there are compelling circumstances requiring the immediate removal of the student from campus. This does not preclude the student’s right to appeal AIA’s decision to suspend/cancel the student’s enrolment. All such appeals must be made within 20 working days of the letter issued to the student indicating that his or her enrolment has been cancelled.

Cancellation/Suspension Due to Misbehaviour

In cases where AIA has decided to cancel/suspend a student’s enrolment due to misbehaviour (as outlined above), AIA will take the following steps:

- Administration will contact the student to discuss the issue and to determine how the issue might be rectified. This meeting will be documented and signed by both parties and included in the student’s file.

- Where the issue or behaviour continues, the student will be given a warning **in writing** and invited to discuss the issue with the Campus Manager. This meeting will be documented and signed by both parties and included in the student's file.
- Should the issue or behaviour persist, the student will be issued a final letter indicating AIA's intention to cancel or temporarily suspend the student's enrolment. The letter will indicate that the student has 20 working days within which to appeal using AIA's internal appeals process. A copy of this letter will be kept in the student's file.

Before cancelling or suspending a student's enrolment, will The Ashmark Institute of Australia wait for the Appeals Process to be completed?

Unsatisfactory attendance or academic progress

If the student is appealing AIA's intention to report the student to DIAC for unsatisfactory attendance, non-payment of fees, academic progress, AIA will maintain the student's enrolment throughout the appeals process, including the external appeal, should the student choose to access an external arbitrator. AIA will only cancel a student's enrolment, if the student has not appealed or the appeals process is completed and the decision is in AIA's favour.

Other reasons

If the student is appealing AIA's intention to cancel or suspend his or her enrolment for other reasons, including **misbehaviour** (ref. previous section for list), AIA will maintain the student's enrolment throughout the internal appeals process. AIA is not required, however, to wait for the outcome of an external appeal before notifying DEEWR through PRISMS of the change to the student's enrolment. Once DEEWR has been notified of the change to the student's enrolment, the student has 28 days within which to choose one of the following 3 options:

- a. leave Australia
- b. show DIAC a new CoE
- c. provide DIAC with evidence that he or she has accessed an external arbitrator.

Please note that The Ashmark Institute of Australia may cancel the student's enrolment without waiting for the internal appeals process to run its course, if the Institute fears for the safety and wellbeing of the student and/or people the student may encounter. The student, however, can still appeal from his or her Australian residence or home country.

10. Student visa obligations and other matters

If you are studying in Australia on an international student visa, you are required to comply with the laws that relating to overseas students in Australia. To assist students in understanding these laws and regulations, the Ashmark Institute of Australia has provided the links below. Some useful sites and contacts for this purpose are:

International student visa conditions

International students holding a student visa must acknowledge and comply with the conditions imposed on their student visa. Failure to meet such conditions and obligations can result in visa cancellation. A list of the conditions and how they apply to you as an international student can be found at www.immi.gov.au/students/visa-conditions-students.htm. Remember to always extend your student visa before it expires.

Contacting the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)

The Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) is the Australian government department that handles Student Visa matters for international students who are already in Australia. In Victoria there are two offices, one in the CBD and the other in Dandenong. Should you be required to contact the Department, it is advisable you contact them on 131 881 first to find out what documentation to bring and/or make an appointment before going to either of the offices.

<u>Melbourne (CBD) Office</u>	<u>Dandenong Office</u>
<p>Office location: Ground Floor, Casselden Place 2, Lonsdale Street, Melbourne VIC 3000</p> <p>Postal Address: GPO Box 241 Melbourne VIC 3001 Tel: 131 881 Fax: 03 9235 3300 Operating hours: Mon-Fri 0900-1600 (Wed 0900-1330)</p>	<p>Office location: 51, Princes Highway, Dandenong VIC 3175</p> <p>Postal Address: Private Mail Bag 5001 Dandenong VIC 3175</p> <p>Fax: 03 9706 7068 Operating hours: Mon-Fri 0900-1600 (Wed 0900-1330)</p>

Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS)

ESOS Act 2000

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) regulates the education and training sector's involvement with overseas students studying in Australia on student visas. DEEWR does this through the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) legislative framework. This protects Australia's reputation for delivering quality education services.

You can view the Act at

http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/ESOS/QuickInfo/ESOS_FrameWork_pdf.pdf

Should you wish to contact the Department of DEEWR, you can do so on:

- ESOS Helpline: (61) (2) 62405069
esosmailbox@dest.gov.au

Requirements for working in Australia as an International Student

International students wishing to work in Australia no longer need to apply separately for a 'student visa with permission to work' under Australia's new visa arrangements. Under the new processing arrangements, which came into effect 26th April 2008, all student visas will be granted with work rights attached. This removes the need for you as an international student to make a separate application; thus, enabling you to commence part-time work as soon as the commencement of your course.

Under this new arrangement, students' visa information will be stored electronically for access through the Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) service, which will allow you to view your visa details online. Employers, government agencies and education providers are also allowed to check your details with your consent.

To access your visa details, you will need to go to http://www.immi.gov.au/e_visa/vevo.htm, and then select 'VEVO for visa holders' link. You will be asked to supply your VEVO password in order to access your visa details. If you have not obtained or wish to reset your VEVO password, you will need to call 131 881 in Australia.

Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

What is OSHC?

In Australia, The Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) requires international students to have continuous Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for the duration of their stay in Australia as a Student Visa holder. This is a compulsory condition of a student visa, and failure to comply will result in visa cancellation.

OSHC is a private health insurance scheme that allows international students to access appropriate health care in Australia at an affordable rate. There are four Australian health funds registered to provide OSHC. For more information about OSHC with AHM Private, visit their website at www.ahm.com.au/

For detailed information on what is covered by AHM Private OSHC, Ashmark Institute's preferred OSHC provider, visit:

<http://www.ahm.com.au/Overseas-Students/About-OSHC.aspx#whatcovered>

11. Attendance Policy

In order to remain compliant with student visa conditions, what percentage of classes a student must attend?

- 1) For a student to achieve satisfactory attendance, (he/she) needs to attend **at least 80%** of scheduled classes during a semester (or a course, if the course is shorter than a semester).
- 2) However, if, at any point during the semester (or course, if the course is shorter than a semester), a student's attendance of scheduled classes falls **below 80% but remains at or above 70%**, The Ashmark Institute of Australia (thereafter known as AIA) may choose not to report the student to DIAC for unsatisfactory attendance,

Scenario 1:

- a) The student's attendance is at least 70%; and
- b) The student is making satisfactory academic course progress

Scenario 2:

The student produces documentary evidence clearly demonstrating that compelling or compassionate circumstances apply.

**Please refer to the policy - Satisfactory Course Progress on AIA's website for more information. (<http://www.ashmark.edu.au>)*

- 3) At any point during a semester (or a course, if the course is shorter than a semester), if a student's attendance has fallen **below 70%** and it is clear that, even if the student attends every class until the end of the study period, 70% attendance will not be reached, AIA is required to report the student to DIAC for unsatisfactory-attendance. Before reporting the student to DIAC for unsatisfactory attendance, AIA issues the student with an NIR (Notification of Intention to Report) letter advising the student to appeal the decision to report within 20 working days.

**Please refer to the policy - "Complaints and Appeals on AIA's website for more information.
(<http://www.ashmark.edu.au/new1/complaints.htm>)*

How is attendance monitored?

1) Attendance is monitored over the entire study period (18 weeks). A **study period** is usually one semester and is approximately 18 study weeks long. However, if the course is shorter than a semester, the study period is deemed to be the number of weeks required to complete the student's designated course. During the study period, students are required to attend 20 hours of classes each week. Hundred percent attendance is calculated on the number of academic weeks in the study period multiplied by 20 hours. Attendance is not monitored on any public holidays that fall during an academic week and are not included in the attendance calculation.

2) Trainers/Assessors are required to mark attendance at the beginning of **every** session. Trainers are advised to use the symbol "P" for Present and "A" for Absent on the attendance rolls. If a student is late by more than **15 minutes** for a session, he or she will be marked absent for the **whole session**. Please be advised that **session's duration** is considered in AIA's attendance-monitoring procedure; for example, if the student misses a 1.5 hour morning session, his/her attendance records indicate that he/she missed 1.5 hours of classes. Similarly, if he/she misses a 2 hour afternoon session, his/her attendance records indicate that he/she missed 2 hours of classes.

3) At the end of each academic week, students' attendance rolls are passed to the administration staff who updates the student's attendance percentage. Please note, **at any point in time**, attendance percentages are always calculated to indicate the student's **maximum possible attendance on the last day of semester**, should the student not miss any classes from the last day on which attendance was calculated until the last day of the study period.

Hence, if student's attendance percentage at the end of Week 5 is calculated to be 93 percent, this means that, if he/she do not miss any class between the last day on which attendance was monitored and the last day of semester, his/her attendance will be 93 percent on the last day of that semester. In other words, the attendance percentage remains the same if the student continues to attend his/her classes but never increases and it always decreases if the student misses any of his/her classes.

Should you have any queries about attendance monitoring policy and procedure, please do not hesitate to contact The Ashmark Institute of Australia.

Additional Notes:

1. If a student commences his/her study after a semester has started, attendance is monitored from the first day on which the student was officially enrolled in the classes.
2. If a student disappears from the session without the trainer/assessor's permission after being marked present on the attendance roll, the trainer/assessor has the right to change the student's attendance status to absent for that session.
3. A student must be **physically present in the class** during the class hours in order to be marked 'present' on the attendance roll. Also, an absence supported by a medical certificate is counted towards the student's total absences when calculating attendance.

For ESL course, if a student extends his or her enrolment in the current course, thereby getting a new CoE, the student's attendance is monitored over each of the CoEs separately, rather than over the entire period of the student's enrolment in ESL course with AIA. In addition, 80% attendance is calculated for the period of the CoE, not for the term.

PROCEDURE FOR WARNING STUDENTS IN DANGER OF BREACHING STUDENT VISA CONDITIONS BECAUSE OF UNSATISFACTORY ATTENDANCE:

If I am at risk of breaching my visa conditions because of unsatisfactory attendance, will the Institute notify me?

Yes, the Institute will issue you with a **warning letter**, in accordance with the following policy:

1) **FIRST WARNING LETTER:** If a student's attendance falls close to **85 percent of scheduled classes within a study period**, the student is issued a **First Warning Letter** advising the student that he/she is at risk of breaching his/her visa conditions because of unsatisfactory attendance. The letter also advises the student to make an appointment with the Institute's Student Support Officer to discuss the reasons for the absence.

The warning letter is sent to the student's Australian residential address. It is, therefore, essential that the student should notify the Institute within 7 working days whenever he/she changes his/her address.

2) **SECOND WARNING LETTER:** If a student's attendance falls close to **80 percent** of scheduled classes within a study period, the student is issued a **second warning letter** advising the student that he/she is at risk of breaching his/her visa conditions because of unsatisfactory attendance. The letter also advises the student to make an appointment with the Institute's Student Support Officer to discuss the reasons for the absence and to find if there is some way in which the Institute may assist the student, so that he/she does not breach his/her student visa conditions because of unsatisfactory attendance. The Student Support Officer is required to access the student's academic course progress report prior to the meeting with the student.

The second warning letter is issued to the student in the same manner as the first warning letter. (please see above FIRST WARNING LETTER).

NIR LETTER: If, at any point during the semester (or course, if the course is shorter than a semester), a student's attendance of scheduled classes falls **below 80% but remains at or above 70%**, The Ashmark Institute of Australia (AIA) may choose not to report the student to DIAC for unsatisfactory attendance,

Scenario 1:

- a) The student's attendance is at least 70%; and
- b) The student is making satisfactory academic course progress

Scenario 2:

The student produces documentary evidence clearly demonstrating that compelling or compassionate circumstances apply.

**Please refer to the policy - Satisfactory Course Progress on AIA's website for more information. (<http://www.ashmark.edu.au>)*

- 4) At any point during a semester (or a course, if the course is shorter than a semester), if a student's attendance has fallen **below 70%** and it is clear that, even if the student attends every class until the end of the study period, 70% attendance will not be reached, AIA is required to report the student to DIAC for unsatisfactory-attendance. Before reporting the student to DIAC for unsatisfactory attendance, AIA issues the student with an NIR (Notification of Intention to Report) letter advising the student to appeal the decision to report within 20 working days.

**Please refer to the policy - "Complaints and Appeals on AIA's website for more information. (<http://www.ashmark.edu.au/new1/complaints.htm>)*

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCESS:

1. *If student undertakes an internal appeal, processing starts within 10 working days of the appeal and student's course enrolment is maintained during the processing.*
- 2 (a) *If internal appeal is successful, the letter of the appeals outcome is sent to the student advising him/her to continue his/her course and the student's enrolment is maintained.*
- 2 (b) *If internal appeal is unsuccessful, the letter of the appeals outcome is sent to the student advising him/her to make an external appeal within 10 working days.*
3. *If the student undertakes an external appeal, the student has to provide the proof of appeal and his enrolment is maintained.*

ISSUING SECTION 20 NOTICE TO THE STUDENT:

Section 20 is issued to the student via the PRISMS by PRISMS Administrator and sent to the student by post and student's enrolment is cancelled in the following cases:

1. If the student does not appeal against the NIR letter within 20 working days.
2. If the student does not undertake any external appeal within 10 working days from the outcome of internal appeal if internal appeal is unsuccessful.
3. If the external appeal is unsuccessful.

Are there any other circumstances in which I will be issued a warning letter?

Yes, if you are absent from the Institute for **5 consecutive class days**, the Institute will issue you a warning letter advising you to contact AIA immediately to discuss the reasons for your prolonged absence. The warning letter will be issued to the student in the same manner, as outlined above in the section relating to the First Warning letter.

If I am absent due to illness, should I bring in a medical certificate?

Presentation of a medical certificate will not automatically result in your attendance not being monitored during the period covered by your medical certificate. Only in **compelling or compassionate circumstances**, a medical certificate will be taken into consideration on a case by case basis.

Also, please note that **back-dated** medical certificates are not accepted. It is, therefore, important that student should have a medical certificate **at the time that he/she is unwell**. However, an absence supported by a medical certificate is counted towards the student's total absences when calculating attendance.

Do I have to attend classes if I have Recognition for Prior Learning (RPL) for units being taught?

Students are advised to apply for RPL before course commencement, so that a study schedule can be planned well in advance. Students must attend all scheduled classes until and unless advised in writing from AIA that they are allowed to be absent for a unit.

Students who have been **formally granted** course credits or RPL for particular units by AIA may be exempted from attending those units when those units are being run at The

Ashmark Institute of Australia. (ref. section titled *Course Credit* on how to apply for course credits).

12. FAQ

Credit transfer/RPL

How do I apply for credit transfer/RPL?

The Ashmark Institute of Australia offers students Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) towards all courses to those who have accredited qualifications in relevant areas. Students wishing to gain course credit must apply on the official application form titled COURSE CREDIT APPLICATION form available at the Little Collins St Campus. If you are wishing to receive course credit on the basis of previous studies, you need to bring your original academic transcripts with unit names, codes and your results clearly indicated. AIA will make a copy of these and return the original to you.

How will credit transfer/RPLs benefit me?

By applying for Credit Transfer/RPL, you may be able to complete your course of study earlier and it enables you to formally obtain recognition for previous studies and reduce the cost of your course.

Results

How can I find out my results?

Results are generally published only after all units have been completed during a semester. As trainers need time to mark all outstanding assignments, final semester results are, generally, not available until the start of the new semester.

If you have any queries regarding obtaining results, please see Administration at Lt Collins St Campus.

I have not passed all my units, what shall I do?

- If you are not passing units you are required to apply for re-assessment. Please note that AIA allows students to resit an assessment, a second time with no cost to the student. However, if a student fails to do the reassessment on the scheduled day or fails again, the student will be required to pay a fee. Please see student policies for more details.

- Appropriate support/intervention strategies will be arranged throughout the semester to assist you in achieving course requirements

How do I apply for my certificate?

You are eligible to receive your course completion certificate, if you have successfully completed your studies. What does this mean?

- You successfully met all the assessment requirements of the course you are enrolled in.
- You have paid all your tuition fees including any re-assessment fees.

To obtain your certificate, and other documentation such as a Completion letter or Statement of Attainment you will need to contact Administration at Lt Collins St Campus.

How do I obtain a copy of my CoE?

Please make an appointment with Admissions and they can issue a copy of your current CoE.

How can I suspend my studies?

Deferring or suspending studies means to temporarily delay or postpone studies. A deferment or suspension of studies can be initiated by either AIA or the student. If you wish to suspend or defer your studies, it is advised that you first speak to Administration and place your request in writing (also, please go to Student Policies Section: Suspending, deferring or cancelling a student's enrolment)

Students should note that deferring, suspending or cancelling their enrolment may affect their student visas. Students are advised to contact DIAC on 131 881 for further information.

How to apply for a deferment or suspension of studies?

Students must submit a form to Administration requesting to defer or temporarily suspend their studies, together with documentary evidence verifying their situation (for example, a police report). AIA will process the application within 7 business days. Should the application be refused, AIA will provide written reasons for its decision. A copy of AIA's response will be kept in the student's file.

Part-time work - Do I need a work permit?

Once they have commenced studies, international students wishing to work in Australia no longer need to apply separately for a 'student visa with permission to work' under Australia's new visa arrangements. Under the new processing arrangements, which came into effect 26th April 2008, all student visas will be granted with work rights attached. This removes the need for you as an international student to make a separate application; thus, enabling you to commence part-time work as soon as the commencement of your course.

Under this new arrangement, students' visa information will be stored electronically for access through the Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) service, which will allow you to view your visa details online. Employers, government agencies and education providers are also allowed to check your details with your consent.

For more information please visit the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) website at http://www.immi.gov.au/students/students/working_while_studying/conditions.htm

Do I need to tell the Institute when I change my address?

Yes, Condition 8533 of your student visa, requires you to notify your educational provider of any changes in your residential address within 7 days. Failure to do so is a breach of Condition 8533 and may result in a cancellation of your student visa by DIAC.

What happens if I am sick and am unable to attend class?

Students who are absent should see a registered medical practitioner and obtain a medical certificate. The medical certificate must state that you have a medical condition and the period you will be unfit for class. You will need to give a photocopy of the medical certificate to your trainer and keep the original to provide to DIAC, if they request it. However, please note that, only in exceptional circumstances, even if a medical certificate is presented, will you be marked absent from class.

If I am unable to pay my fees on the due date, what do I do?

Students who are unable to meet their contracted payment schedule must see the Accounts/Finance Department as early as possible before the due date of their scheduled fee payment to negotiate an extension (for more details, please see Student Policies: Fee Payment Policy)

13. Complaints and Appeals Process

Above all, we want your time at The Ashmark Institute of Australia (AIA) to be a happy one. If you have a grievance concerning any aspect of your life at AIA, the Institute has a complaints and appeals process that you can access to help you solve your problem. The procedure to follow is:

A. RESOLVING YOUR COMPLAINT INFORMALLY

Step 1) Discuss the problem informally with your trainer/staff member.

Step 2) Make an appointment to see the Student Support Officer to discuss the problem. If you are unsure who to see, please contact Student Reception at our Little Collins St Campus and they will direct you to the appropriate Student Support Officer

Step 3) If you are not satisfied with the outcome of Steps 1 and 2, make an appointment to speak with the Director of Studies who will endeavour to resolve your problem.

B. LODGING A FORMAL COMPLAINT

Internal Appeal:

Should you be dissatisfied with the outcomes of Steps 1-3, you may access the Institute's formal *internal* appeals process. To access this process you must:

Put your complaint in writing, including your desired outcomes. You may use the General Request form available at Reception or, you may write your complaint on a plain sheet of paper and attach it to the form. Please include your date of birth and contact details.

AIA will commence the internal appeals process within 10 working days of receiving your formal written complaint.

Preparing for the appeals meeting:

The student may bring a *support person* to any relevant appeal meetings. However, please note that the support person cannot be a migration agent or lawyer.

In addition, the student is advised to bring all supporting evidence, including documents that may assist the student in his or her case. Supporting evidence may include

- All correspondence sent to the student by AIA including letter and emails
- A log of discussions the student has had with staff concerning the issue/complaint under review
- Medical certificate
- Any other documents the student may feel will support his or her case

Notifying student of Appeal Meeting outcome:

You will be given a **written statement of the outcome** of the appeal, including reasons for the decision. If you are successful in your appeal, AIA will immediately implement the outcome of the appeal. Once the statement of the outcome of the appeal has been finalised, AIA will contact you by telephone to ask you to come to AIA to collect the statement. If AIA is unable to contact you by telephone, the statement will be posted to your Australian residence.

EXTERNAL APPEAL

Should you be dissatisfied with the outcome of the Internal Appeal, you may access an *external* body, whereby someone outside AIA will hear your case. AIA will honour the independent arbitrator's decision.

Further, AIA will maintain your enrolment during the appeal process, unless the AIA fears for the safety and wellbeing of the student and/or people the student may encounter, in which case the AIA may cancel the student's enrolment. The student, however, can still appeal from his or her Australian residence or home country.

One Institution that is willing to act as an independent arbitrator is:

ACPET

PO Box 551, East Melbourne, Vic 8002

Suite 101, Level 1, 126 Wellington Parade, East Melbourne, Vic 3002

Ph: (03) 9416 1355, Fax: (03) 9416 1895

Email vic@acpet.edu.au

Please note that the external appeal body may charge a fee.

If you decide to appeal externally, you have **10 working days** from the date that appears at the head of the Internal Appeal's Statement of Outcome within which to lodge an appeal with the external arbitrator. At the same time, you **MUST** notify AIA that you intend to appeal externally. If, within the 10 day period, you have not notified AIA that you have appealed to the external body, AIA will consider that you do not intend to appeal externally and the complaint will be deemed closed.

Finally, students may find out more about their rights and laws governing their stay in Australia by contacting the Department of Education, Science and Technology on: esosmailbox@dest.gov.au or DEST HELPLINE Tel: (02) 62405069.

14. Transfer and Release Policy

Students must stay with their principal provider for at least six months.

A: Transfer Request and Release Policy

All applications for Release must be made on the 'Request for Release' Form and submitted to a Student Support Officer.

The submission of this 'Request for Release' Form must also include an accompanying Offer Letter from another Provider.

The submission of the Release Letter request will be acknowledged with a written receipt by The Ashmark Institute of Australia.

The consideration and approval, or non approval, of a Letter of Release will be done at no cost to the student.

Students who have completed 6 months of their principal course.

Students who have completed 6 months of their principal course are eligible to apply for a release letter without restriction or reference to meeting any special requirements.

Students who have not completed 6 months of their principal course.

Students who have not completed 6 months of their principal course are able to apply for a release letter and this may be granted, based on factors related to

- i. the ability of the Principal Provider to deliver a course
- ii. the altered academic, social, residential, cultural or other personal circumstances as described by the student, that impact on his/her ability to sustain attendance and academic performance, and which would be more readily delivered at an alternative Provider.

Issuing release letters to students under 18 years of age*

If the student is under 18 years of age and not living with his/her parent or nominated relative,

- i. The offer letter must indicate that the new provider has accepted responsibility for the student's accommodation and general welfare. The new provider will need to consult with Ashmark Institute about the exact date on which the new provider will take over responsibility for the care of the student. This date must be indicated clearly on the offer letter. If no date is indicated, Ashmark Institute will not issue a release letter.
- ii. The Ashmark Institute of Australia must have written confirmation that the student's parents/guardians support the transfer.

* Note: The Ashmark Institute of Australia does not accept enrolments by students under 18 years of age.

General Policy Statement

The Ashmark Institute of Australia (thereafter known as AIA) will consider all requests with due reference to the well-being of the student and the best educational opportunities and outcomes, as the student's situation may indicate. Notably though, AIA will not be involved in short term measures associated with non-compliant responses to attendance or academic short-comings by the student.

Student Support Officers will make a diligent effort to ensure the best outcome for the student requesting a transfer or release letter, and finalise the outcome as quickly as possible.

The Ashmark Institute of Australia will consider the Request for Release application and reply to the student in writing giving all details of the AIA's deliberations and factors taken into consideration, within 10 working days of the receipt of the application.

If the request is refused, the student will be provided with a detailed, written response as to the factors considered and the assessments made of each of these factors. The report will be clear and detailed so as fully inform the student and assist in the decision to proceed to an appeal via the AIAs process. The student has 20 working days from the Release Request notification to notify AIA of the intention to appeal the decision.

If a student transfers into another provider, any refunds of course fees paid to The Ashmark Institute of Australia will be in accordance with the AIA's Refund Policy.

Release Letter

The Release Letter will include information on the need to contact DIAC to see whether to see whether a new visa is required.

Filing Release Letter Applications

A student's request for a release letter and associated documentation including Offer Letter, and the AIA's response, will be kept in the student's file. The originals will be kept on file at the Institute and copies provided to student.

B: Enrolling Transferring Students

General Policy Statement

The Ashmark Institute of Australia will not enrol any international student already studying in Australia, who has not yet completed at least 6 months with their original Provider's principal course or does not have a written Release Letter.

Enrolment procedure

A student seeking to transfer to The Ashmark Institute of Australia from another Provider is required to complete an Application for Enrolment form.

After assessment of the Application, if appropriate, an Offer Letter will be provided to the student.

The student will then, with the provision of a Release Letter from the Principal Provider, complete the Formal Acceptance and Agreement document.

The student will then be issued with a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) for The Ashmark Institute of Australia.

Document Management

A copy of Release Letter provided by the student's initial Provider must be kept in the student's file along with other enrolment documents, Agreements and Confirmation of Offer Letters

15. Releasing Documents To Students Reported To DIAC

In the event that a student is reported to DIAC for unsatisfactory attendance, unsatisfactory course progress or other matter, documents such as the student's attendance records will be released to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship or other related government departments such as the Appeals Review Tribunal, only if the government requests such documents.

It is not a part of the Ashmark Institute of Australia's policy to release such documents directly to the student or any person acting on the student's behalf.