

**Commonwealth of Australia**  
***Higher Education Support Act 2003***

**STUDENT SERVICES, AMENITIES, REPRESENTATION AND ADVOCACY  
GUIDELINES**

Guidelines made pursuant to section 238-10 of the  
*Higher Education Support Act 2003*

I, Chris Evans, Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations, pursuant to section 238-10 of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* ("the Act"), make the attached Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy Guidelines for the purposes of the Act.

Dated this 7<sup>th</sup> day of December 2011.

Signed

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CHRIS EVANS  
Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations

**Commonwealth of Australia**

***Higher Education Support Act 2003***

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GUIDELINES**

**(i) CITATION**

This legislative instrument may be cited as the Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy Guidelines.

**(ii) AUTHORITY**

This legislative instrument is made under section 238-10 of the Act for the purposes of the Act.

**(iii) DATE OF EFFECT**

This legislative instrument shall come into effect on 1 January 2012.

# STUDENT SERVICES, AMENITIES, REPRESENTATION AND ADVOCACY GUIDELINES

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1.1 The purpose of these Guidelines is to specify the special requirements for student services and representation in 2011 and later years, as contemplated by section 19-67 of the *Act*, including:
- 1.1.2 The requirements to be known as the **National Access to Services Benchmarks**, are those contemplated by paragraphs 19-67(2) (a) and (b) of the *Act*. They are intended to ensure that higher education providers give appropriate attention to a range of essential student support services.
- 1.1.3 The requirements to be known as the **National Student Representation Protocols** are those contemplated by paragraph 19-67(2) (c) of the *Act*. They are intended to ensure that enrolled students are able to participate in the decision making processes of the HEP through opportunities for democratically elected student representation.

### **1.2 INTERPRETATION**

- 1.2.1 Unless the contrary intention appears, the terms in these Guidelines have the same meaning as in the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*.
- 1.2.2 The following terms are defined specifically for these Guidelines:

**Act** means the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

**Guidelines** means these Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy Guidelines

**HEP** means a higher education provider that receives a grant under Part 2-2 of the *Act* in respect of the year 2012 or a later year.

## **CHAPTER 2: NATIONAL ACCESS TO SERVICES BENCHMARKS**

### **2.1 PURPOSE**

- 2.1.1 The purpose of this chapter is to specify the requirements to be known as the National Access to Services Benchmarks.

### **2.2 NATIONAL ACCESS TO SERVICES BENCHMARKS**

- 2.2.1 HEPs must provide an orientation program for all enrolled students.
- (a) An orientation program should be accessible to all enrolled students, allowing for those enrolling at different entry points.
  - (b) An orientation program may provide relevant information to enrolled students in a number of ways. This might be in written or oral form, or by electronic means via the HEP's website, email, SMS broadcasts or pod casts.
- 2.2.2 HEPs must ensure that students enrolled in an \*undergraduate course of study, a \*postgraduate course of study or who are \*overseas students are provided with information on how to access:
- (a) **Health services**  
These services will include medical and emergency health services, mental health services and health-related counselling. HEPs must not charge students if making a referral to an external provider.
  - (b) **Welfare services**  
These services will include services to assist with accommodation, financial matters, legal concerns and employment. HEPs must not charge students if making a referral to an external provider.
- 2.2.3 HEPs must ensure that where they provide health or welfare services directly to enrolled students, trained and qualified staff are engaged to meet the needs of enrolled students.
- 2.2.4 HEPs must provide enrolled students with access to advocacy officers for services in relation to matters arising under the academic and procedural rules and regulations of the HEP. Advocacy officers should act in the best interest of students and be disassociated from the HEP's decision-makers in respect of the HEP's academic and procedural rules and regulations and other staff who administer the HEP's academic and procedural rules and regulations.
- 2.2.5 HEPs must consider the varying and differing circumstances of the enrolled student body in determining what would be a reasonable and appropriate level of support at a particular campus. HEPs should consider, but not be limited to, factors such as the student cohort and the campus location.

## **CHAPTER 3: NATIONAL STUDENT REPRESENTATION PROTOCOLS**

### **3.1 PURPOSE**

- 3.1.1 The purpose of this chapter is to specify requirements to be known as the National Student Representation Protocols.

### **3.2 NATIONAL STUDENT REPRESENTATION PROTOCOLS**

- 3.2.1 The form of student representation must be established through consultation between enrolled students and the relevant HEP.
- 3.2.2 A HEP must publish the details of the mechanisms, approved by the governing body of that HEP, by which enrolled students are consulted and able to participate in the decision making processes of the HEP.
- 3.2.3 A HEP must provide enrolled students with the opportunity to participate in a process to democratically elect student representatives.
- (a) Student representatives must be students enrolled at the relevant HEP. Representatives must be elected by students, with at least one representative elected from each of the following categories:
- a. students enrolled in an \*undergraduate course of study;
  - b. students enrolled in a \*postgraduate course of study; and
  - c. \*overseas students\*.
- (b) In meeting this obligation a HEP is to meet the necessary and reasonable costs of conducting valid and transparent polls for this purpose. Reasonable support might, for example, include funding for polling booths and ballot papers.
- 3.2.4 A HEP must provide adequate and reasonable support resources and infrastructure for elected student representatives to carry out their functions on behalf of enrolled students. Resources and infrastructure might, for example, include office space and IT equipment.

Note: These Guidelines do not preclude student representatives at a HEP forming an organisation that represents enrolled students at that HEP.

- 3.2.5 HEPs must have a formal process of consultation with democratically elected student representatives and representatives from major student organisations at the HEP regarding the specific uses of proceeds from any compulsory student services and amenities fee charged under section 19-38 of the Act.

Consultation must include:

- (a) Publishing identified priorities for proposed fee expenditure and allowing opportunities to comment on those priorities by students and student associations and organisations; and
- (b) Meeting with democratically elected student representatives and representatives from major student organisations at the HEP to consider the priorities for use of fee revenue.