

## STUDENT INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION POLICY

<b>Institution</b>	Universal Higher Education (UHE)
<b>Policy name</b>	Student Information and Communication Policy
<b>Policy Governance</b>	Academic Board

### 1. Purpose

This policy outlines UHE’s approach to marketing and communicating information about UHE and its course offerings to prospective and enrolled students. It aims to guide the development of UHE marketing and communication plans, products and practices, in line with government regulations. This policy is written in the context of the National Code Part D: ESOS standards which set out the obligations on registered providers in delivering education and training to overseas students.

CRICOS-registered providers must comply with 15 standards that ensure their quality of education and professionalism is of a sufficiently high standard to enrol international students. The 15 standards cover the following aspects of delivery of education to international students:

- Standard 1** Marketing information and practices
- Standard 2** Student engagement before enrolment
- Standard 3** Formalisation of enrolment
- Standard 4** Education agents
- Standard 5** Younger overseas students
- Standard 6** Student support services
- Standard 7** Transfer between registered providers
- Standard 8** Complaints and appeals
- Standard 9** Completion within expected duration
- Standard 10** Monitoring course progress
- Standard 11** Monitoring attendance
- Standard 12** Course credit
- Standard 13** Deferral, suspension or cancellation of study during enrolment
- Standard 14** Staff capability, educational resources and premises
- Standard 15** Changes to registered providers’ ownership or management

## 2. Overview

A key priority for UHE under its 2016-20 Strategic Plan is to grow its student numbers in two new higher education course offerings, drawing from a combination of domestic, offshore and international onshore student markets. Internationalisation is a key student recruitment priority.

UHE will be developing marketing and communication strategies to:

- Promote UHE’s offerings to targeted student markets; and to
- Ensure that new applicants and enrolments are informed of their rights, obligations, and other educational information to support their learning experience and outcomes at UHE.

Information for prospective and enrolled students will align with UHE’s commitment to put a student-centered focus on quality and outcomes, working to ensure that students are appropriately informed and supported “to learn, to succeed, to qualify, to connect and to enjoy their time whilst at UHE in Melbourne”.

Communication strategies aim to support a consistent, consolidated and coordinated public image in the domestic and international market that complies with relevant acts and regulations.

## 3. Principles

UHE is committed to undertaking marketing and communication practices that are ethical and effective to:

- Appropriately meet the needs of prospective and enrolled students; and
- Maintain the integrity and reputation of both UHE and Australia’s higher education sector.

Key principles that underpin UHE’s approach to marketing and communication include:

- UHE communication strategies support a consistent, coordinated public image and brand for UHE.
- UHE marketing and recruitment practices encourage the enrolment of students who are suitably prepared and equipped for higher education study.
- UHE marketing strategies encourage effective decision making about the suitability of course offerings for meeting students’ needs and expectations.
- Representation of UHE and its course offerings is accurate.
- Students are informed of their rights and obligations and of any substantive changes to the course offerings.

- Students can readily access timely and relevant information about UHE policies, procedures, course offerings and available support to guide informed decision-making.
- Information strategies recognise and support diversity among prospective and enrolled students, including students with special needs.
- Information is provided in plain language, explaining any special or technical terms.

The above principles apply whether the information is promoted directly by UHE or through agents or other parties, supported through formal contract arrangements.

#### **4. Marketing and recruitment strategies**

UHE will implement a range of marketing strategies aiming to:

- Increase awareness and interest in the 's program
- Grow enquiries about UHE course offerings
- Grow applications, offers, acceptances and enrolments

Target audiences include:

- Prospective domestic and international students
- Key influencers such as parents
- Staff in partner educational institutions
- International Agents

Key messages will include:

- UHE is an innovative provider of quality higher education courses, meeting high academic standards
- UHE offers a unique and creative learning and community experience in the heart of Australia's cultural and education hub
- UHE's courses have strong industry partnerships with opportunities to take part in internships, practical placements and more
- UHE is internationally connected and prepares students for globally mobile careers

Marketing strategies will include a focus on the following channels:

- Website (a new portal for prospective students)
- Social media (paid and unpaid)
- Careers and higher education expos, fairs and events
- Publications including undergraduate guides
- Targeted advertising channels
- Industry partnerships /supporters
- Skype appointments (set up to allow UHE staff to advise prospective students and Agents)

- Direct marketing (including emails/e-newsletters)

Content for marketing and recruitment strategies will represent UHE and its courses accurately, including in relation to:

- The status of TEQSA or professional body accreditation.
- Fees and charges.
- The admission requirements and credit arrangements for each course (and where appropriate each unit) of study.
- The outcomes associated with undertaking study (including employment, possible migration and eligibility for further study).

## 5. Admissions

UHE admissions processes will ensure that prior to enrolment and acceptance of fees, students are informed of their rights and obligations including in relation to:

- All known charges associated with their proposed studies and the potential for changes.
- Policies, arrangements and potential eligibility for credit for prior learning.
- Policies on withdrawal or changes to offers, acceptance and enrolment, tuition protection and refunds.

All admission and other contractual arrangements with students (or their parents or guardian), including any conditions, are to be in writing.

Information available for students prior to acceptance of an offer will assist students in making decisions about arrangements for study at UHE, including:

- Course and unit design, delivery, pre-requisites, key dates, recognition of prior learning, credit transfer, and pathways to employment.
- Orientation and induction, contact points, access to learning resources, and IT systems.
- Expectations and obligations of students including conduct and behavior, financial obligations, critical deadlines, policies relating to misconduct and disciplinary procedures, leave and deferral policies, and obligations on international students.
- Access to academic policies and requirements.
- Information on support services available, including English language support, personal support and emergency services.
- Information to assist resolution of grievances, including external appeals processes.
- Information to assist international students about living and studying in Australia where applicable.
- Opportunities to participate in student representative bodies.

## 6. Enrolled students

In addition to the above information being readily available, communication plans will ensure that enrolled students are given reasonable notice of changes to UHE's operations including any:

- Increases in fees and associated costs.
- Changes to course or related service delivery location or arrangements.
- Changes that may affect their choice of, or ability to participate in, an intended course(s) of study.

## 7. Particular requirements relating to international students

UHE will comply with the Higher Education Standards, ESOS Act, National Code, Trade Services Act and in country regulations in developing communications material for international students. This includes that all electronic and printed marketing materials, including websites and advertisements, must clearly identify UHE's name and CRICOS number.

### Management of Agents

UHE relies on international education Agents to recruit to its programs. The role of the Agent is to support and submit a student's application to UHE. The Agent is also responsible for providing the student with accurate and comprehensive information and ensuring the required and verified documents are attached to the application. The agent recruiting for on campus study will also assist the international student with his/her visa application to the Australian Government.

Formal contracts will be in place with UHE Agents to support appropriate recruitment strategies and practices. UHE will implement strategies to monitor performance and take corrective action where needed. UHE will not accept students from an education agent or enter into an agreement with an education agent, if it knows or reasonably suspects the education agent to be:

- Engaged in, or to have previously been engaged in, dishonest practices, including the deliberate attempt to recruit a student where this clearly conflicts with the obligations of registered providers under Standard 7 (Transfer between registered providers)
- Facilitating the enrolment of a student who the education agent believes will not comply with the conditions of his or her student visa

- Using Provider Registration and International Students Management System (PRISMS) to create Confirmations of Enrolment for other than a bona fide student
- Providing immigration advice when not authorised under the Migration Act 1958 to do so.

UHE will engage with and train Agents in the UHE programs and foster awareness of government regulations, by sending emails/e-newsletters internationally and meeting with Agents abroad - commencing in 2017. UHE will support Agents with institutional and course information packs and marketing material that comply with regulations.

## **8. Evaluation**

Marketing and communication plans will be developed with key objectives and targets against which performance will be monitored and evaluated.

This may include, for example:

- Enquiries received via email, phone and website form.
- Enquiries received at agent offices and events.
- Recipients and open rate of direct marketing activities.
- Social media engagement.
- Website visits.
- Number of applications, offers, acceptances and enrolments.
- Withdrawals /early attrition and reasons for departure.
- Student complaints.

## **9. Roles and responsibilities**

The Academic Board approves and oversees the operation of the Student Information and Communication Policy.

The Academic Registrar is responsible for developing and reviewing the Student Information and Communication Policy and leading its implementation in the provision of information to students, working closely with the Academic Deans.

The Head of Corporate Services is responsible for the provision of professional services to support the marketing and communication activities.