

Outcome 5: Orientation

05

 [Link to outcome 5 in the Code](#)

Signatories must ensure that international students have the opportunity to participate in a well-designed and age appropriate programme that provides the information and advice necessary for a student at the outset of their educational instruction.

The intent of this outcome is to ensure that international students, and where relevant their parents or legal guardians, participate in a robust orientation programme developed to help them settle in to life and study in New Zealand.

2019 amendments to outcome 5

As part of your orientation programme, you are also required to provide information about the international student's rights and entitlements, including any entitlement to a fee refund if the student voluntarily withdraws from your organisation (→ see *clause 20(1g)*).

There is also a requirement under outcome 7 that you provide students with information and advice on how to adjust to a different cultural environment in New Zealand. While this is not an explicit requirement for your orientation programme, you may wish to consider at which point/s in your students' 'lifecycle' such information is best provided. As noted above, it may be that some cultural adjustment information is provided at orientation, as well as later in the enrolment period.

Navigating these guidelines

Under 18 year old and/or under 10 year old students

Headings specific to under 18 year old and/or under 10 year old students are highlighted in blue.

Icons are used throughout the document to help signatories locate information:

-  'Star icon' signals suggestions for good practice
-  'Arrow icon' draws attention to website resources.

Good practice for orientation

- Orientation is not necessarily a one-off presentation – it is a programme that can run from before a student arrives, through the first weeks, and possibly even months after they get here. There is a natural flow-on from the orientation period into the advice and support that you provide for the ongoing safety and well-being of students.
- Students are likely to need some information before they get here, so they can learn about what life and study will be like in New Zealand, and learn about the unique aspects of your institution, location, and community.
- Agents also play an important role in orientation and support. They are often the main source of information for pre-arrival information, orientation, and support for students. It is vital that you provide agents with ongoing training and support, consider prescribed actions within agent contracts, and have a process in place to gain feedback from students around the information agents provide.
➔ See *outcome 2 section for further guidance.*
- Students may not be able to absorb the information at once. A good orientation programme will consider information overload. A planned approach where you “triage” the most important information and provide it at key points in time will assist students to digest information. For example, information for the first few days after arrival might include navigating the airport, what to expect on the first day, who to contact for help, etc. You may consider giving the student this information prior to arrival. You can then progressively give out more information as it becomes relevant.
- Tailoring orientation information to your particular learners is also important. For example, you may have short-term students where issues such as homesickness may not be as relevant.
- Checking students’ understanding of information and putting in place ways to repeat important messages will help students not only to cope with their study, but also manage the impact of living and studying in a culture foreign to them.

20. Process

20(1a)

Providing information on institutional policies

As signatory, you need to decide which policies are relevant to your international students and to inform them accordingly.

Consider if your policies for domestic students sufficiently include international students' rights and responsibilities, and if any amendments are required. You may need to develop new policies specifically for international students.

Make sure your international students have access to the relevant policies and remind them regularly, so they know where to find this information.



Some ways to ensure students have access to policies:

- a policy list in student handbooks
- send the policies with the offer/enrolment/contract
- have a policy folder in a central location for international students to access
- place your policies on your website.

20(1b)

Providing information on services, support and facilities

Include services and facilities provided within your organisation, such as academic and pastoral care support, and how students can access services and make the most of them.

Do your research and if relevant, include available community-based services your international students can access, including health and youth support services, sports teams, extra-curricular activities, careers support, religious groups, arts, music, and cultural clubs. This helps international students feel connected with the wider community.



Consider when, where, and how you provide this information, for example:

- on your website
- student handbook
- in meetings with students and parents
- social media.

20(Ic)**Providing names and contact details of designated staff members**

Signatories are required to provide a 24/7 contact number for international students and their families in case of an emergency (→ see *outcome 6, clause 22 (e)*). It is good practice for one or more senior staff members, who are experienced pastoral care practitioners, to hold and/or share this responsibility.

Ensure your international students understand what the emergency contact is for and give them some examples of when they should use it.

Be sure to define what an emergency is so they understand that the designated contact person is not the same as emergency services. Your international students need to know when to call 111.

**Consider how you can effectively provide this information to students, i.e.:**

- lists on walls
- emergency cards
- in the student handbook
- a mobile phone application
- on your website.

20(Id)**Providing information on health and safety**

The health and safety information you provide will depend on what is appropriate for your international students' age range and needs. You will need to make decisions about this and tailor your information accordingly.

**Consider how you might:**

- prepare international students for culture shock, such as New Zealand's different way of teaching, cultural norms and the emotional phases of change
- make sure that international students know there are health and safety support services available to them and how they can access these
- provide information about off-site health and safety services available to international students, and how to access these
- consider how international students can access the support they need, including language support
- develop staff awareness about students experiencing culture shock, providing health and safety support, and the procedures to access these services, so they understand and can look out for the wellbeing of international students in their class.

20(Id) (continued)**Providing information on health and safety****Health and safety information might include:**

- how to cope with culture shock
- available welfare facilities, including personal health services, mental health services, drug education and counselling
- water and road traffic safety, including pedestrian and cycling safety
- culturally appropriate behaviour in New Zealand
- sexuality education, health promotion, and sexual and reproductive health services
- relevant New Zealand laws, including laws on the sale of alcohol and tobacco products

**The following links may be useful:**

[Water Safety New Zealand](#)

[NZTA information for visiting drivers Drive Safe](#)

[Tenancy Services](#)

[Alcohol laws and penalties Sun safety](#)

[Budgeting resources](#)

[Sexual and reproductive advice for international students](#)

[Earthquakes and other natural disasters](#)

20(Ie)**Providing information on grievance procedures**

You must provide information about:

- your organisation's internal grievance procedures for raising concerns and/or making a complaint
- external grievance procedures, including how and when to contact iStudent Complaints (the dispute resolution scheme operator for the Code) or NZQA (the Code administrator).

This information is provided to ensure that international students understand how to raise concerns and/or make a complaint about your organisation.

**This information could be provided in:**

- your international student handbook
- offer of enrolment/contract
- your organisation's website
- posters displayed around campus.

20(1e) (continued)**Providing information on grievance procedures**

The following links may be useful:

[Poster on how to make a complaint under the Code](#)

[Dispute Resolution Scheme operator, iStudent Complaints](#)

20(1f)**Providing information on termination of enrolment**

This process relates to offers, enrolment, contracts and insurance in the Code for the conditions of termination and termination process (→ *See the guidelines for outcome 3*).

Consider:

- how you might help your international students (or parents or legal guardians if under 18) understand the circumstances and processes relating to the termination of their contract of enrolment
- your organisation's behaviour management policy or student code of conduct and how this might relate to the international students' performance leading to the termination of their contract of enrolment.

20(1g)**Providing information on student's rights and entitlements**

Signatories must ensure that the fees paid by international students for a programme of study in New Zealand are secure and protected in the event of a student withdrawal or provider's closure.

This information can be included in the international student handbook or offer of enrolment, or be made available before arrival, on arrival or during their enrolment.

→ *More information about managing withdrawal is included in outcome 8.*

20(2)**Ensuring that parents, legal guardians, and/or residential caregivers of students under 18 have access to orientation information or the programme provided**

This is a requirement to ensure that the relevant caregivers of international students are aware of the information that you have provided to students, so that they can also support students to find the information they need throughout their enrolment period with you.

The key words here are "have access to". Please note this is not a requirement to run a separate orientation for parents and caregivers of international students who are planning to live in New Zealand, to assist them to settle in to New Zealand. You may wish to support parents in this way, but it is not a requirement of the Code.

**Consider, for example:**

- the scope of orientation information required by parents, legal guardians, or residential caregivers. This will depend, for example, on the age of the students and whether parents are accompanying the student to New Zealand or living overseas.
- how to communicate effectively with parents whether in New Zealand or overseas
- how best to provide orientation information to parents, for example, over a period of time, in the international student's first language, and for individual situations
- to what extent you will help parents feel welcome, ensure they have access to good support while living here, and be able to make informed choices.