



2025 Pastoral Care of Tertiary & International Learners Code of Practice – Self Review

Introduction

At Hillary Outdoors Education Centre, we are committed to providing high-quality pastoral care for all learners. Our goal is to nurture a safe, supportive, and well-being-centred environment where every student can succeed. To uphold this commitment, we align our practices with [The Tertiary and International Learners Code of Practice - NZQA](#). This self-review reflects on the previous year's compliance and practice, examining our processes for gathering, analysing, and evaluating information. It also informs planning, implementation, and monitoring for any improvements required in the year ahead.

Pastoral Care for Tertiary Students

Hillary Outdoors prioritises the safety and well-being of tertiary learners in our operations. Our approach includes strict adherence to our Education Policy and Safety Management Systems, as well as regular reviews of key documents such as the Tertiary Prospectus, Student Handbook, and Learner Success Plan. We engage a Health and Safety Advisory Committee (HSAC) and seek student voice through ongoing verbal and written feedback. Student input, incident and safety reports, termly interviews, and open communication all contribute to the continuous evaluation of our pastoral care.

Systems for identifying and responding to emerging concerns include an on-call Duty Manager, open communication pathways, prompt incident response, and facilitated referrals to external support services where needed. All incidents and near misses are formally reviewed by management and HSAC.

We invest in continual staff development through training in Mental Health First Aid, Child Protection, LGBTQ awareness, Pre-hospital Emergency Care, NZOIA qualifications, Privacy Act requirements, and both seasonal and on-the-job training.

Our learner well-being framework is robust and multi-layered. It includes a Hauora (well-being) Retreat Week in Term One, termly student interviews, regular Hauora follow-ups, an

open-door policy, and a strong culture of communication.

We welcome and value diverse learner voices through student meetings, approachable staff, active role modelling of diversity, intentional efforts toward gender balance, and open discussions about LGBTQ communities and Māori culture.

Respecting the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi is central to our practice. This is demonstrated through collaboration with local iwi, iwi representation on our Board, DOC concessions, regular hui, and the requirement for staff to complete a two-day Atua Matua course. Students participate in mihi whakatau, karakia, and waiata, fostering respect for place, culture, and community.

Learner engagement is encouraged through diverse and supportive staff, transparent communication channels, and the nature of our experiential programmes. We support physical and mental well-being through weekly fitness and Safe & Sound sessions.

We maintain clear, accessible, and fair complaint processes. All concerns are recorded and resolved constructively. Grievance procedures are outlined during course orientation, detailed in the Student Handbook, and supported by online resources for domestic and international student dispute resolution schemes.

Weekly expectations and requirements are shared in advance via WhatsApp and Google Classrooms.

Our Safety Management Systems require all instructors and students to report incidents throughout the programme. Trends or recurring themes result in countermeasures, with all incidents and corrective actions peer-reviewed by HSAC.

Participation in all activities is voluntary; however, students are encouraged to engage at a level that appropriately challenges them. On enrolment, all students acknowledge that risk is inherent in outdoor learning, as outlined in the 2026 Student Handbook: Acknowledgement of Risks Appendix.

Minor injuries, such as sprains, cuts, and bruises, occur throughout the programme year.

Students are reminded that they are responsible for their own actions and safety during personal practice time within the parameters of Self-Directed Learning. Mishaps may occur outside of programme hours that still require careful management during the course. Students are strongly encouraged to inform their Programme Coordinators of any changes to their health conditions throughout their time at Hillary Outdoors, as this enables appropriate support and assistance during their recovery.

International Student Pastoral Care

In addition to our tertiary pastoral practices, Hillary Outdoors has specific systems to ensure

comprehensive support for international learners. Our culturally diverse staff team is committed to prioritising the safety and well-being of students from overseas, supporting their success from the moment of initial contact.

Marketing materials are regularly reviewed for consistency with NZQA Code guidelines. Online interviews allow for an open discussion of an applicant's needs and current circumstances. Our Prospectus and Student Handbook clearly outline expectations around insurance, English language proficiency, fee protection, and fair refund processes.

To strengthen connections across the student community, a dedicated WhatsApp group supports both international and domestic learners before and after enrolment. Feedback from recruitment interviews and enrolment processes helps us evaluate effectiveness and refine our approach.

International student orientation includes an introduction to local community facilities and services— such as healthcare providers and the nearest hospital—ensuring students know what support is available before they need it.

We are reviewing our recruitment processes to better guide prospective international students in making well-informed decisions about their studies.

Summary

Hillary Outdoors' tertiary and international pastoral care practices align strongly with our strategic goal of prioritising learner well-being, safety, and success.