

English Australia was the first Australian organisation to develop and put in place a Tuition Assurance Scheme (TAS) designed to safeguard students in the case where a college closes without the capacity to refund student fees.

This is regarded by the English Australia Executive and Board as a vital means of protecting Australia's international reputation as a provider of a quality education, and a protector of international student consumer rights. Overseas governments, media, students, their families and their agents do not differentiate between provider types or visa types when it comes to a college closure. It is in everyone's interests to come together to protect Australia's reputation by working together to ensure students are taken care of.

This scheme is offered to member colleges for no additional fee, and while it is to be hoped that activation of the TAS is a rare event, it can give students and their families peace of mind to be assured that their interests will be looked after if they enrol in an English Australia member college.

**From 1 July 2012 the Australian government established a new mechanism for protecting student visa holders under the ESOS Act – the Tuition Protection Service (TPS).**

**In the case of a college closure, student visa holders will now be taken care of by the TPS and colleges who take these students will receive funding from the TPS to do so. The TPS will communicate directly with students and colleges regarding the placement process.**

However, because non-student visa holders have no protection under the ESOS Act, English Australia chose to retain its TAS for the reasons that it was originally established, namely peace of mind for all students and their families and an ongoing market differentiator for member colleges.

## *What is the provider's role in the TPS placement process?*

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In circumstances where a default occurs, all providers will be given an opportunity to participate in a placement round, as outlined in the Steps below.

### Step 1

A default has occurred and the TPS Director has created an active round of TPS placement process for affected student.

### Step 2

You have been identified as a provider who has an alternative course suitable for affected students.

### Step 3

TPS Administrator contacts you via email to gain your consent in offering placement/s to affected students. If you decline the offer the process concludes for you.

### Step 4

If you agree to accept affected students, the details of your course become available to affected students.

### Step 5

Interested students contact you and discuss the course and enrolment process with you.

### Step 6

You create an offer of placement to the student on the TPS system.

### Step 7

Student completes the enrolment process on the TPS system.

### Step 8

Once student has a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) on the TPS system, you will receive a payment of the unspent tuition.

*Note: The Step by Step process described above is for guidance purposes only and to the extent that it is inconsistent with the Education Services for Overseas Students Act (the ESOS Act) 2000 the ESOS Act prevails. Providers should not rely on this Step by Step process description alone and must read the requirements in the ESOS Act.*

## What does the English Australia Tuition Assurance Scheme placement process consist of?

These are the main steps in the process of placing students in accordance with the English Australia Tuition Assurance Scheme. Member colleges involved in the scheme will be kept informed during the process.

Generally, once a member college closure is confirmed, the following process will apply:

1. English Australia will liaise with the TPS and personnel of the closed college to gather information about student enrolments, financial details, courses etc, and to arrange student meetings.
2. English Australia will advise member colleges of the closure, and that as a result the English Australia Tuition Assurance Scheme is to be activated. English Australia will advise member colleges of their obligations under the scheme and request their cooperation.
3. A student meeting will be held to advise students on what will be done to place them in an alternative college to complete their course, and students will provide information about their course weeks, payments etc using a *Relocation Request Form*.
4. English Australia will analyse student data and college data, and plan placement of students under the terms of the English Australia Tuition Assurance Scheme, ensuring this is done in as equitable a way as possible and to minimise the financial burden on member colleges.
5. English Australia will notify students in writing of their *Relocation Offer* and request confirmation of acceptance of the offer in writing.
6. Once students have accepted their relocation offer, English Australia will notify the accepting college in writing. Students will be asked to take a copy of the confirmed offer to their new college as soon as possible.

*If we are approached directly by displaced students, what advice should we give them?*

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Student visa holders should be advised to contact the TPS. You should advise non-student visa holders that English Australia is arranging to place them in an English Australia member college, and that they should attend the student meeting in their city or contact English Australia for advice on 02 9264 4700 or the nominated email address for college closure: [Nameofclosedcollege@englishaustralia.com.au](mailto:Nameofclosedcollege@englishaustralia.com.au)

*Can we refuse to accept displaced students when English Australia contacts us with a list of students to be placed in our college?*

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Under the terms of English Australia membership and the payment of the annual membership fee, member colleges subscribe to the English Australia Tuition Assurance Scheme. This includes an agreement that members will accept displaced students in the case of a member college closure. However, if accepting any students would put you in breach of your NEAS accreditation conditions or if you have any other concerns you should discuss these with English Australia.

*When we accept a displaced student, can we charge an application / registration / admission fee to cover administrative costs?*

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No. Under the terms of the English Australia Tuition Assurance Scheme, displaced students will be placed fee-free.

*If we accept a displaced student, and that student wishes to extend his or her course beyond the number of weeks owing on a prepaid course, can we charge fees for the additional weeks?*

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Yes. English Australia member obligations are to accept displaced students for the number of weeks nominated by English Australia in the confirmation of relocation. If a student wishes to extend his or her course beyond this period, member colleges can offer the student a place based on their regular fees.

## *When will displaced students commence their course at our college?*

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The aim of English Australia is to place students as quickly as possible so that there is minimum disruption to their studies. However, this may vary according to the number of students involved. Displaced students will normally begin at their new college on a Monday.

## *If we are approached by agents to enrol displaced students, should we enrol them?*

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Member colleges should ONLY accept students referred to them by English Australia.

## *If displaced students approach us directly for a place in our college, should we accept them?*

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Member colleges should ONLY accept students referred to them by English Australia.

## *How many students are we likely to have allocated to our college?*

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Following the experience of previous college closures, English Australia's approach to placement is to respond on a case by case basis to further closures of member colleges, applying the following principles:

- ❖ English Australia will aim to minimise the financial burden placed on member colleges;
- ❖ English Australia will manage reputation risk by attempting to place all non-student visa holders who do not have any other access to consumer protection;
- ❖ the Executive Director will make an assessment of the capacity of member colleges depending on the size, profile and location of the member college and through consultation with affected member colleges;
- ❖ the Executive Director will consult with the English Australia Executive regarding the approach to be taken.

## *I have been sent a student on an EAP program but the student tests below the level of the EAP programs my college is accredited to deliver. What are my obligations?*

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As far as possible English Australia will consult with you to ensure that students placed at your college are at the appropriate level to join your course. If this is not the case, please contact English Australia to discuss the options.