



## **2024 Pastoral Care of Tertiary & International Learners Code of Practice Self Review**

### **Introduction**

At the Hillary Outdoors Education Centre, we hold a strong commitment to ensuring effective pastoral care for all our learners. Our aim is to cultivate a secure and well-being focused environment where each student can achieve learning success. To realise this commitment, we align our practices with the guidelines outlined in The Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021. For a comprehensive understanding of the code, please refer to this link: [Code Summary](#).

This Pastoral Care self-review is undertaken to gather, analyse, evaluate our compliance and required processes for the year prior and to plan, implement and monitor any changes required for our current practices.

### **Pastoral Care for Tertiary Students**

Hillary Outdoors prioritise the well-being and safety of our tertiary learners through a multifaceted approach. This encompasses adhering to our Education Policy and Safety Management Systems, conducting regular reviews of our Tertiary Prospectus, Student Handbook, and Learner Success Plan. We engage a Health and Safety Advisory Committee (HSAC) and actively collect student feedback through both verbal and written channels. Our ongoing commitment is evaluated using student input, safety and incident reports, termly individual interviews, and a culture of open communication.

Our established systems for identifying and addressing emerging concerns encompass having an on-call Duty Manager, fostering transparent communication, taking prompt action to address incidents, and facilitating referrals to external support services when required. Incidents and near misses undergo thorough review by management and HSAC.

Our dedication to continuous staff development includes mandatory training in Mental First Aid, and Child Protection; in addition to seasonal and on-the-job training sessions, LGBTQ awareness, Pre-hospital Emergency Care, NZOIA qualifications, and Privacy Act training.

A robust learner well-being and safety framework is in place, featuring a Hau ora (well-being) Retreat week and courses, termly student interviews, an open-door policy, and a culture of communication.

Diverse learner voices and feedback are embraced through student meetings, approachable staff, an atmosphere of openness, diversity role modelling, active pursuit of gender balance, and discussions on LGBTQ communities and Māori culture.

Central to our approach is the respect for Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles, which is upheld through collaboration with local iwi, the presence of an iwi trustee on our Board, holding DOC concessions, participating in regular hui with local iwi, and ensuring staff completion of a two-day Atua Matua course. Our tertiary students of diverse ethnicities engage in Mihi Whakatau (welcome ceremony), karakia (blessings), and waiata (Māori songs), acknowledging both place and people.

Active learner participation and engagement are intrinsic to our approach, facilitated by our diverse and approachable staff, transparent communication channels, and the inherent nature of our courses. Our

dedication to learner well-being encompasses physical and mental health support, including weekly fitness sessions, safe and sound sessions.

Our commitment to accessible complaint processes remains steadfast. Any complaints are recorded and resolved in an amicable and constructive manner. We achieve this through well-outlined grievance procedures in the student handbook, explained during course orientation. Website resources are also provided for both domestic and international students for Dispute Resolution Schemes.

To prepare students, information on WhatsApp will provide details on each week's requirements and expectations and these are posted the week prior.

Hillary Outdoors' Safety Management Systems require tertiary instructors and students to report all incidents throughout the course. Countermeasures are put in place for trends of concerns (including near misses). Incidents and action taken is peer reviewed by our external Health and Safety Advisory Committee members.

Participation in all activities at Hillary Outdoors is voluntary although students are supported and encouraged by their peers and instructor to participate to a level which challenges them.

***Students of Hillary Outdoors Tertiary courses acknowledge risk is an inherent part of learning in the outdoors.*** These risks could include harm to both person and property. Hillary Outdoors has safety systems in place which are designed to identify and manage risks and hazards and prevent serious harm which otherwise could happen. While we achieve high safety standards, not all risks can be eliminated completely. The natural and general hazards associated with participating in the Hillary Outdoors Tertiary Programme may include but are not limited to;

- extreme weather (thunderstorms, extreme winds, rain, snow, etc.)
- avalanche
- tsunami
- rock/ice fall
- volcanic activity <https://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/central-north-island/places/tongariro-national-park/>
- earthquakes
- fire (open fires, cooking stoves, etc.)
- extreme temperatures
- social (physical contact, other users, etc.)
- remote locations
- height (falling objects or people)
- deep water
- moving water (river rapids, etc.)
- sharp objects (knives, tools, etc.)
- speed (vehicle travel, skiing, etc.)
- toxins (stings, bites, fuel, poison, etc.)

#### **Risk Acknowledgment**

1. Knowing the risks, students are aware that the tutors and Hillary Outdoors will take all reasonably practicable steps to manage these risks to an acceptable level.
2. At any time during the programme students are free to ask for information on an activity and make their own decision on the level of involvement suitable for them alone.
3. Students need to declare and confirm that they are physically fit and can swim as per the entry requirements of the programmes.
4. Students need to declare and confirm that they have advised Hillary Outdoors Tertiary Programme of any medical condition or injury by completing the medical form accurately.
5. Students need to consent to receive medical treatment which may be deemed to be necessary by Hillary Outdoor staff and contractors in the case of injury, accident, or illness while undertaking study with Hillary Outdoors.
6. Students need to understand that they may need to pay to any costs associated with an evacuation due to health/medical that are not covered by ACC.



7. Students need to understand that if they are/or appear to be impaired by alcohol or drugs, that they will be refused participation by Hillary Outdoors staff and contractors.
8. If students choose to act outside instructions given by the programme staff, then they do so at their own risk and are personally responsible for any consequences. They are responsible to ensure that their actions or inactions do not jeopardise the safety of others.
9. If a student's health conditions change during the length of their course of study with Hillary Outdoors, they will inform their tutor in writing immediately.
10. When students are practicing skills in personal time without a tutor present, but within Self Directed Learning boundaries and scope set by staff, **students are responsible for their own safety** and actions (which might include driving in other students' cars, being in remote areas, dealing with technical equipment in difficult situations, and being in risk environments such as moving water, height, poor weather, etc).

There have been several sprains, knocks, cuts and bruises but no critical incidences in the year.

## International Student Pastoral Care

Beyond our commitment to Tertiary Student Pastoral Care, Hillary Outdoors has distinct measures in place to ensure comprehensive support for our international students. Our diverse team, including tutors from various cultures, is dedicated to prioritising the well-being and safety of our international learners. We focus on fostering student success right from their initial contact with us.

We consistently update our marketing materials in accordance with NZQA Code guidelines. Online video interviews with applicants enable open discussions on their current information and needs. Our Tertiary Prospectus and Student Handbook outline appropriate insurance coverage, English language proficiency, transparent fee protection, and adherence to fair refund policies.

To foster connections among international and tertiary students, we maintain a dedicated WhatsApp group that facilitates engagement before and after enrolment. We continuously gather feedback to assess the impact of our practices, obtaining vital insights through recruitment interviews and the enrolment process. This feedback helps refine our ongoing approach.

Orientation for International Students will highlight community facilities and services in the area, so there is a better understanding of what is available before it is needed (e.g. doctors, closest hospital etc).

Annually, we revise our recruitment process format to guide potential international students in making well-informed decisions for their education.

## Summary

Hillary Outdoors Tertiary practices closely align with our strategic goal of prioritising learner well-being, safety, and success.