

# Academic Communication - Communicating With Students in Correctional Facilities - Guidelines

**November 2024 - These guidelines are expired. See instead Part C of the [Course and Subject Procedure - Delivery Management](#).**

## Section 1 - Purpose

- (1) The 2012 revision of the [Academic Communication with Students Policy](#) acknowledged that staff will need to communicate with students from correctional facilities. The Policy has been ratified by Academic Senate and was implemented university-wide in 2013.
- (2) Section 6 of the Policy refers to the [Admissions Policy](#) and [Admissions Procedure](#), that require:
- students to have access to an internet-connected computer capable of communicating with Charles Sturt University online systems (refer to the [Admission Policy](#)); but
  - in exceptional circumstances, if a student is unable to communicate with Charles Sturt University online systems (for example because they are an inmate of a correctional facility or reside at an isolated geographical location) the teaching team or supervisor may develop a plan for communication to enable the student to fulfil subject requirements.
- (3) The fundamental problem is the mismatch between the University's move to online delivery and student inmates' heavily restricted access to the Web. Depending on the inmate's status in the corrective services system, access at best may be gained indirectly through the correctional facility's Education and Training Officer and at worst, not available at all to the student inmate.
- (4) This document provides guidelines for staff to use when dealing with student inmates.

### Scope

- (5) These Guidelines are provided for staff members who, in the course of their duties, have contact with student undertaking study from a correctional centre. When communicating any plan that may be developed by a teaching staff member for a student inmate all other University policies also need to be considered.

## Section 2 - Glossary

- (6) Nil.

## Section 3 - Policy

- (7) Refer to [Academic Communication with Students Policy](#) for policy relating to academic communication with all undergraduate and coursework postgraduate students of Charles Sturt University.
- (8) Refer to [Higher Degree By Research Candidates Policy - Academic Communication](#) for policy relating to academic

communication with all higher degree by research candidates and supervisory teams of Charles Sturt University.

## Section 4 - Procedures

(9) Nil.

## Section 5 - Guidelines

### Communication with Student Inmates

(10) All contact with a student inmate should occur through the correctional facility.

(11) When informed that an inmate from a correctional facility is enrolled in a subject the Subject Coordinator should make contact with the relevant person from the corrective facility. For Corrective Services NSW this is the Education Officer.

(12) In instances where the Subject Coordinator is not informed of the student's status, but through the course of the teaching session comes to realise the student inmate's circumstances, contact should be immediately made with the Education Officer to put in place a communication management plan for the student.

(13) Initial contact with the Education Officer should aim to set a clear communication management plan for the student.

(14) The Subject Coordinator should make it clear to the Education Officer the level of internet and computer access required for the student to complete the subject. This may include submission of assignments, accessing the student's e-box, online tests/assignments, access to forum discussions, the subject outline and CSU Interact. It is the responsibility of the Education Officer to ensure that the student is provided with this level of access.

(15) Applications for extension of time for assessment items should be made by the Education Officer on the student inmate's behalf. This includes advice from the Education Officer should correctional facility "lockdowns" interfere with the student's study schedule.

(16) Applications for assignment extensions should be made on formal Department of Corrective Services' letterhead and shall be deemed to meet the University's requirement of supporting documentation.

(17) If a subject has a compulsory intensive school this needs to be communicated during the initial contact. If the student cannot attend the intensive school then the Education Officer should be advised that the student will need to withdraw from the subject and enrol at such time when they can attend.

(18) Exemption from compulsory intensive schools should normally not be granted unless:

- a. the student has previously attended the intensive school for a subject; or
- b. the student has previously completed the subject as part of a previous degree.

(19) Refer to the [Special Consideration Policy](#) or to a Faculty policy if relevant.

(20) Irrespective of the student inmate's request, all contact with the student must be through the Education Officer and not through a member of the student's family or support network.

(21) Charles Sturt University staff should not provide the student inmate with personal information such as mobile or home phone numbers or home addresses. All contact should be through official Charles Sturt University channels and a record of the contact kept by the Subject Coordinator.

(22) The [Admissions Procedure](#) requires that the teaching team or supervisor develop a plan for communication to enable the student to fulfil subject requirements. The special communication management plan for the student inmate should be established in collaboration with the Head of School or delegated person such as a Course Director.

(23) Maintain a professional manner at all times in all dealings with the student inmate and correctional facility authorities.

(24) As with all students, the confidentiality of the relationship with the student inmate should be respected. As a general principle, do not discuss a student inmate with a third party external to the University without the student inmate's prior consent. However, it may at times be necessary and appropriate to discuss administrative matters with an Education Officer liaising with the University on behalf of the student inmate.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	6th December 2015
<b>Review Date</b>	2nd December 2024
<b>Approval Authority</b>	
<b>Approval Date</b>	23rd October 2015
<b>Expiry Date</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Unit Head</b>	Janelle Wheat Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
<b>Author</b>	Megan Bond
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Division of Learning and Teaching