



Australian Government



ABORIGINAL
HOSTELS LIMITED



Welcome to


AHL's Secondary Education Hostels


Your home away from home while studying

A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS, PARENTS AND GUARDIANS



 ahl.gov.au

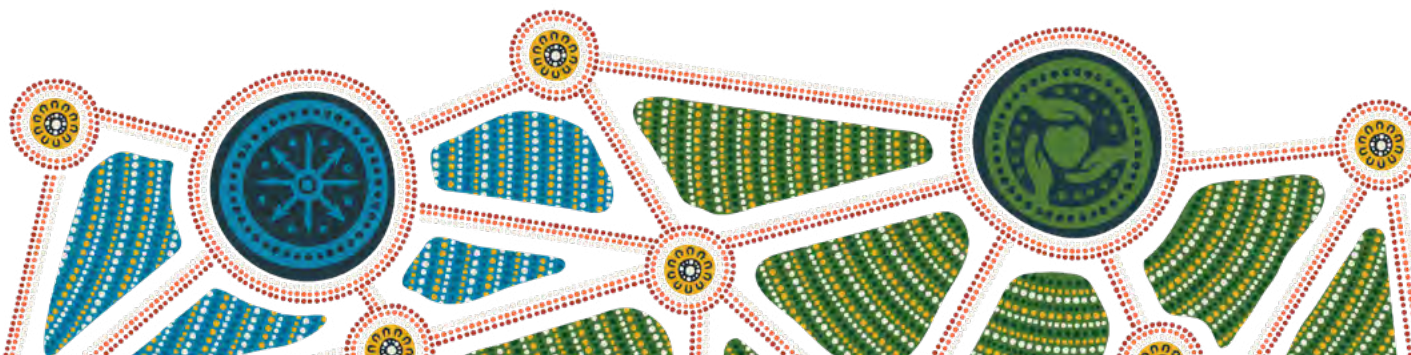
 02 6212 2001

 PO Box 30, Woden ACT 2606



Contents

WELCOME TO AHL.....	2
AHL SECONDARY EDUCATION HOSTEL LOCATIONS.....	3
OUR DUTY OF CARE.....	4
LIFE AT OUR SECONDARY EDUCATION HOSTELS.....	7
BEFORE ARRIVING AT THE HOSTEL.....	11
USEFUL INFORMATION.....	12
HOSTEL EXPECTATIONS.....	15



Welcome to AHL

This guide provides basic information on hostel life and student expectations, however there's so much more to learn about AHL. Our friendly teams look forward to providing more information when you contact the hostel.

AHL provides a home away from home for First Nations secondary education (high school) students to attend school and achieve their educational goals.

AHL operates 7 secondary education hostels across NSW (4), Queensland (1), and the Northern Territory (2). We support students attending school from Years 7 to 12.

We have unique facilities at each hostel which may include pools, gyms, games rooms, sporting ovals and music rooms.

Our in-house dietitians ensure meals are healthy and meet individual dietary needs. Meals are served in the dining rooms and enjoyed by students and staff, creating a homely environment.

Heads of Boarding, Residential Youth Workers and hostel staff provide around the clock support in a caring and safe environment. Students are supported to complete homework and other school requirements and all students are given a laptop to support their schooling and recreational needs. Sports and social activities are a regular feature of hostel life.

AHL's Heads of Boarding and Residential Youth Workers encourage positive behaviour at all times through leadership, mentoring, counselling and by creating a nurturing environment to help guide and assist students with their education and development of life skills.

Boarding with AHL provides a number of benefits, including:

- a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- fresh and nutritious meals designed by our in-house dietitians and cooked fresh at the hostel
- laptops and tutoring to support homework requirements
- after school and weekend activities and regular events
- a home environment that sees students arrive as strangers and leave as family.

While staying at our hostels, students enjoy a safe, comfortable and friendly environment that celebrates culture and respects the individual story of each student.



AHL secondary education hostel locations



NEW SOUTH WALES

Sydney

Biala Hostel (for girls)	38 Lyly Road, ALLAMBIE HEIGHTS NSW 2100	02 9043 9530
Kirinari Hostel (for boys)	340 Box Road, SYLVANIA NSW 2224	02 9043 9510

Dubbo

Grey Street Hostel	2 Grey Street, DUBBO NSW 2830	02 9043 9550
--------------------	-------------------------------	--------------

Newcastle

Kirinari Hostel (for boys)	15 Myall Road, GARDEN SUBURB NSW 2289	02 9043 9560
----------------------------	---------------------------------------	--------------

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Katherine

Fordimail Student Hostel	Lot 2041 Zimin Dr, COSSACK NT 0850	08 7904 0610
--------------------------	------------------------------------	--------------

Tennant Creek

Tennant Creek Secondary Education Hostel	Lot 782 Paterson St, TENNANT CREEK NT 0860	08 7905 8770
--	---	--------------

QUEENSLAND

Thursday Island

Canon Boggo Pilot Hostel	145 Douglas St, THURSDAY ISLAND QLD 4875	07 3151 4720
--------------------------	--	--------------



Our duty of care

We create an environment where students have an enjoyable, comfortable and safe stay.

Once you have entrusted your child into our care, hostel staff act as your child's guardian, with the obligations and duty of care a parent would normally hold.

When you sign the Student Boarding Application Form, you are giving AHL staff authority and consent to act on your behalf regarding your child's wellbeing while they are living at one of AHL's secondary education hostels.

This means that some of the day-to-day decisions that you would normally make, such as permissions for school excursions or visits to the dentist or doctor, will be carried out by the hostel teams.

We will keep in regular contact with you and let you know about your child's activities.

The safety of our students is always AHL's first priority and we are committed to our Child Protection Framework. The framework guides staff to follow correct policies and procedures, to ensure student safety.

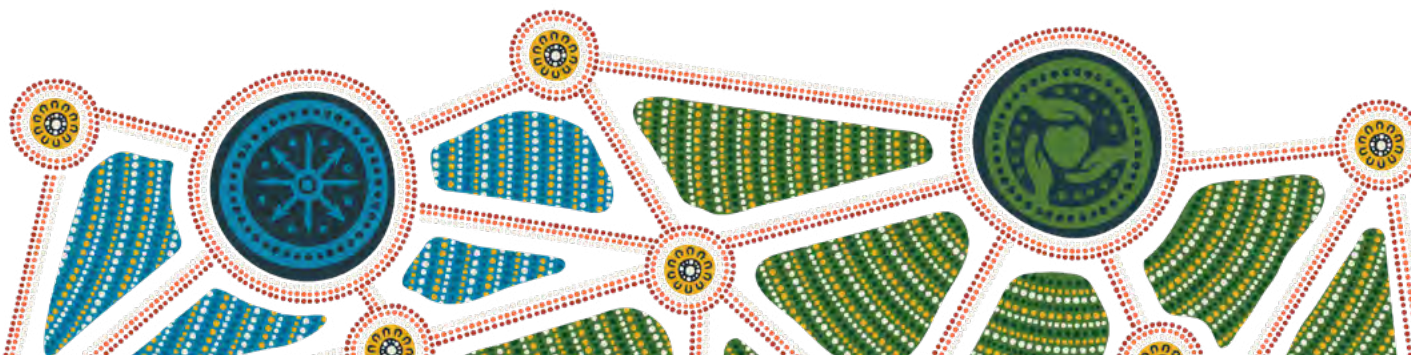
It is important our teams can contact parents and guardians at all times so we keep communication channels open. Please keep our teams up-to-date with relevant contact numbers. This is important in the event of an emergency and if we need to reach you.

If you intend to leave your community for a period of time and will not be contactable, please provide our teams with alternative contact details.

Student welfare

Our secondary education hostel teams have a duty of care to the students residing with us, to provide a safe and healthy environment at all times. Your child's wellbeing is our first priority.

The Student Boarding Application Form details the expectations of parents/guardians and students. These expectations are in place to ensure a safe and respectful stay for students within the hostel.



Expectations of students

We ask students to sign the Student Agreement to the Hostel Rules and Expectations found in the Student Boarding Application Form. This ensures students know what is expected of them when boarding with AHL, including being committed to schooling and always displaying respectful behaviour.

A copy of these expectations is included at the back of this booklet for your reference.

During induction, our staff will explain these rules and responsibilities in more detail and explain why it is important for everyone to follow these rules.

Students will be supported through an orientation process when they start with us. We regularly check in with students and encourage them to talk about how they are feeling and how they are going with hostel life and school.

We ask you to sign the Parent Code of Conduct Agreement in the Student Boarding Application form.

This agreement outlines the three main commitments we need from you to support your child while boarding with us:

1. communication – be open, honest and respectful at all times
2. collaborate – ensure values are upheld and that your child is supported when dealing with feedback and/or concerns
3. privacy – includes protecting the identity of the other students and not sharing personal information.

AHL will take all care and responsibility of your child within the limits of AHL's corporate ability and scope of any agreement. AHL will exercise a duty of care at all times while your child is living at the hostel.

Parental/guardian support while boarding

Working in partnership with you is an important part of the student's success in boarding. We will engage with you regularly to ensure you are kept up to date and we will call on your support when we need it.

We will engage with you regularly to ensure you are kept up to date and we will call on your support when we need it.



How to provide feedback

We value your feedback at all times and encourage you to raise suggestions and assist us to provide the best care we can for your child.

If you have any concerns, please contact the Head of Boarding or other members of the boarding team.



**'Staff are excellent
and very
welcoming'**

- AHL Student

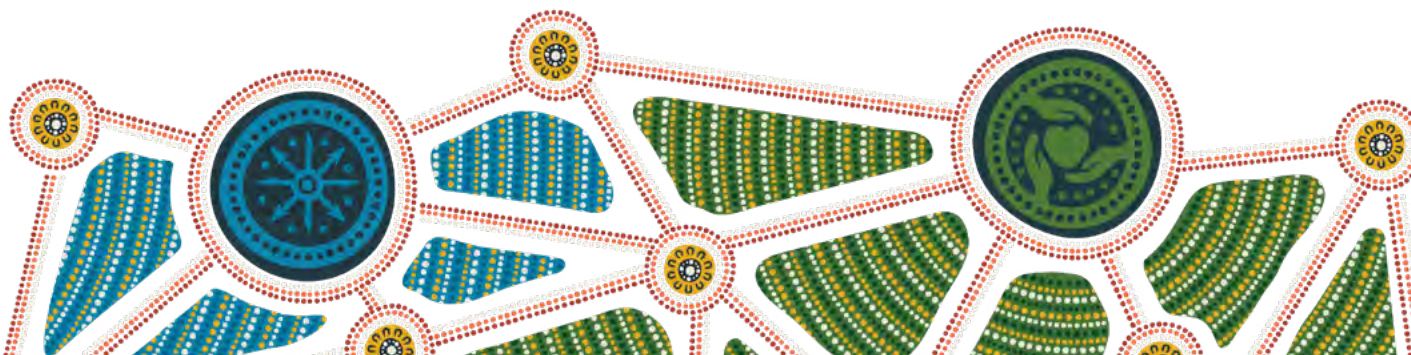
**You can also call the
AHL national office
feedback hotline**

Freecall

1800 640 836

Email

feedback@ahl.gov.au





Life at our secondary education hostels

Students are supervised by our dedicated hostel teams at all times while at the hostel.

We support students to develop a schedule so they can be on time for school and other commitments. Outside of those commitments, we ensure students have plenty of time to relax and enjoy our hostel facilities with other students.

School attendance is very important and students are required to attend school every day unless they are unwell. Sometimes it can be hard getting in a routine, but our dedicated teams are here to help with this.

Students are transported to and from school in the hostel bus, unless other suitable transport is available or schools are within a short walking distance.

We use our buses and other vehicles for transport to and from after school activities and weekend events.

We know secondary students can be a bit overwhelmed by homework. We assist by helping the students to set schedules, providing homework support including engaging external tutors

when required and providing laptops and access to other homework supplies.

We help develop life skills and ask students to take responsibility for keeping their room tidy and for tidying up after themselves. Minor housework will be required on a roster system. This creates a community environment with shared responsibility.

We have a bed time schedule which includes a time for lights out. Laptops, mobile phones and other devices are handed in before bedtime to ensure students get a good night's sleep.

Students are provided with all linen, however students are welcome to bring their own. Please ensure all personal items are clearly marked with your child's name.

Each secondary education hostel is different. Some have single rooms, some are shared. Some have pools and some have specific activity rooms.

Each of our hostels have unique features and our dedicated teams will help ensure your child feels right at home.



Meals and food

All meals are cooked on site by our friendly cooking teams. Our menus are designed by our in-house dietitians to ensure they are nutritious and meet the needs of our students.

We have healthy snack stations for students ensuring there are plenty of options to keep their energy levels up for their busy lifestyles.

Meal times are flexible to accommodate after school activities and events.

Healthy lunch options are provided to pack for school lunches.

Please ensure all allergies or food intolerances are included in the Student Boarding Application Form and discussed with our Heads of Boarding.

Technology

All students are provided with a laptop to use at school and at the hostel. The laptops can also be used for personal use. Some hostels also have computer labs for students to use.

**'The tutors
really help
us with our
school work'**

– AHL Student

School

Secondary school can be challenging for students and we are here to help.

Our teams regularly engage with the school to ensure students are progressing well and to address any areas requiring attention.

We work with each student to help them meet their homework requirements and to get into good study routines.

We provide the basic school supplies required each year.

School uniforms

School uniforms are purchased by AHL at the beginning of each year and the hostels have a uniform clothing pool if replacements are needed at short notice.



Cultural activities

At AHL, we believe celebrating the culture and individual stories of our students is important.

We provide opportunities to share stories and learn from each other. We connect with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to provide cultural guidance and education.

We celebrate significant days including during NAIDOC Week and Indigenous Literacy Day, and our students participate in traditional ceremonies and events.

Recreational activities

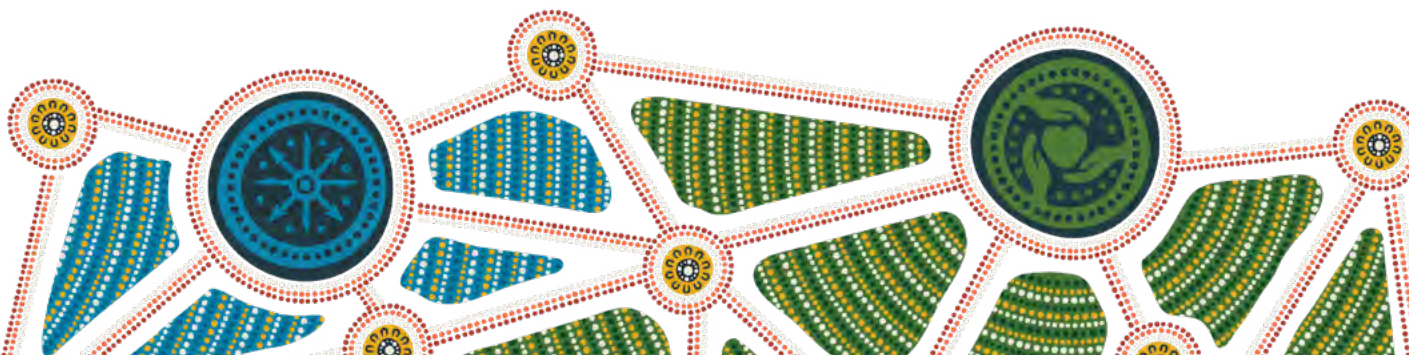
All students are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities after school. There are a range of sports offered by the schools and local clubs. Our teams will help students connect with local sporting clubs, cultural activities and other social activities.

Students are encouraged to discuss their interests with hostel teams so we can see if there is a local group or class available.

Organised activities vary and may include music lessons, dance classes, art classes or sports teams depending on the students' interests.

If there is a swimming pool at the hostel, safety rules will be observed at all times.

Parents/guardians must provide permission for their child to use the pool in the Student Boarding Application Form and indicate their swimming ability.



Weekends

Hostels often have weekend outings. Depending on the hostel location, trips to the river or beach, fishing, sightseeing, football, picnics and barbeques are planned.

We ask students for their suggestions and preferences.

Shopping

Students are given opportunities to visit the local shopping centre.

Television

The hostels have televisions in the lounge rooms. Regular movie nights, footy nights and other viewing events are held for the students.

Staying in touch with family

We encourage students to stay in touch with family and friends.

Students can use their own phones or the hostel phone to stay in touch. We can also arrange virtual meetings via Microsoft Teams.

Students return home during the school holidays and we will work with you to arrange appropriate travel arrangements each term.

Visitors

Family and friends are welcome to visit the hostel. Please call ahead so we know when you are arriving.

AHL have open days and events where parents and friends are invited to attend the hostel premises. ABSTUDY may be able to fund these visits, please talk to our Heads of Boarding to see what is possible.

We ask all visitors to sign in at the hostel office and abide by the hostel rules. This is important for the safety of all students. We are not able to accommodate visitors overnight.

**'Our hostel is very
safe and secure'**

– AHL Student



Before arriving at the hostel

Payment of boarding fees

Boarding fees are fully covered for students who are eligible for ABSTUDY Living Away from Home Allowance.

Boarding fees are paid directly to AHL.

AHL must receive confirmation of ABSTUDY eligibility before your child commences at the hostel.

If your child is not eligible for ABSTUDY Living Away from Home Allowance, the full fees can be paid by the parent/guardian. A tax invoice will be sent to you each fortnight.

Personal belongings

Students are expected to arrive with basic clothing requirements.

Please mark all clothes with your child's name.

Suggested clothing includes:

- casual clothes
- swimmers
- every day wear (for warm and cool climates)
- school shoes, sports shoes, thongs and casual shoes
- pyjamas.

Your child is welcome to bring their favourite items from home such as pillows, doonas or photos of family and friends.

Students can bring music playing devices to the hostel, however, music brought to the hostel or bought whilst living at the hostel must be appropriate for communal residential living.

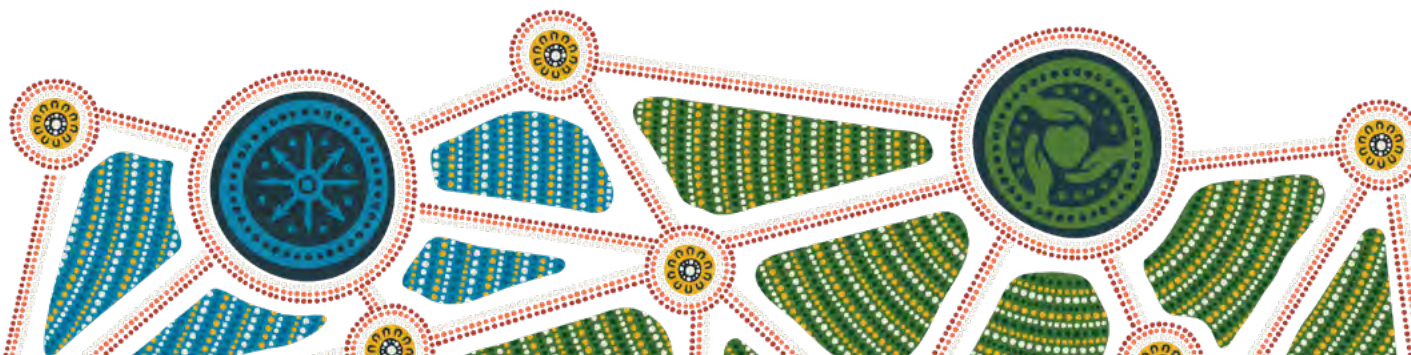
All students will be provided with a laptop. Please notify the hostel if your child would prefer to use their own personal laptop at the hostel.

Your child should not bring expensive personal items to the hostel. AHL cannot accept responsibility for loss or theft of any personal items. There is no facility on site to store and manage valuables.

Students will need to supply their own personal toiletries items such as:

- deodorant (roll-on or pump spray)
- toothpaste and toothbrush
- hairbrush or comb
- soap
- shampoo and conditioner
- feminine sanitary products.

Students receive a fortnightly allowance to cover the costs for basic personal items and regular shopping trips are available to buy supplies.



Useful information

A TO Z OF HOSTEL LIFE

Alcohol and other drugs

Alcohol, cigarettes, vapes, other drugs or possession of these items is strictly prohibited on or off the AHL hostel grounds.

Cultural support

AHL celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and encourages our students to share their culture with others. Hostels partner with local First Nations organisations to support our students and celebrate a range of cultural events.

Our hostels have First Nations staff supporting our students.

Fire hazards

The following items are considered to be fire hazards and are not to be brought onto the hostel grounds:

- matches
- lighters
- candles
- incense.

Housework expectations and laundry duties

Light duties around the hostel will be carried out by students to develop valuable life skills and build a sense of community.

The duties may include, but are not limited to:

- ensuring their rooms are clean and tidy
- sweeping
- mopping.

Bed linen is changed once a week. Students will be given a designated day to strip their bed and take sheets, pillow cases and towels to the laundry for our teams to wash.

Students will wash their own clothes in line with a washing day roster. Washing powder is supplied.

Our teams will support students to use the washing machines and dryers.

Hygiene

We support students to develop healthy habits including ensuring students shower daily and brush their teeth morning and night.

Students should bring their own supply of toiletries. Hostel teams can assist students to purchase more products during shopping trips.

Medical conditions

Students are supported to undertake a free health check-up each year.

The Student Boarding Application Form must contain all medical information required for AHL staff, including Medicare details. These details will be provided to health care providers as required. Students with asthma or allergies must have an Asthma and Anaphylaxis plan, which must be reviewed annually.

If the need to take medication arises after a student commences their stay, please notify the hostel immediately and provide a doctor's letter with the medication. A medical register will be kept on file for administering any

prescribed medication. All medical action plans should be provided on enrolment and updated as required.

If a student becomes unwell, they will be taken either to the local Medical Centre or General Public Hospital and parents/guardians will be informed immediately of any serious illness or medical condition.

Mobile phones

Students are welcome to bring one mobile phone to the hostel. Students must:

- give their mobile phone number to the hostel staff
- hand in their mobile phone each night before bedtime
- not bring mobile phones to the dinner table or homework sessions or have it during in-house meetings
- respect the instructions of the hostel team if they ask for phones to be put aside
- be responsible for the care and use of their mobile.

Phones may be confiscated by AHL staff if the above rules are not followed.

Students arrive as strangers and leave as family.

Money

Large amounts of cash should not be given to students. Cash may be handed to hostel staff for safe keeping, if required.

Prohibited behaviour

We expect students to display respectful behaviour at all times, to ensure the hostel is safe and welcoming for everyone. The following behaviour will not be tolerated:

- swearing
- name calling
- bullying and fighting on or off the grounds of the hostel
- abusive tone and/or language toward others on or off the grounds of the hostel
- aggressive and/or violent behaviour toward others on or off the grounds of the hostel
- stealing.

Property damage

If your child deliberately damages property (owned by the hostel, staff or another student) there will be disciplinary action. Hostel staff will contact parents/guardians if this occurs. Students or their parents/guardians may be expected to pay the full cost of deliberate damage.

Religious activity

For students wishing to attend religious activities or events, please discuss arrangements with the hostel team.

Security

The hostels are staffed at all times including overnight. Some hostels have CCTV cameras in public areas.

Smoking

AHL hostels have a strict no smoking policy. Smoking or possession of cigarettes, vapes or any drug is prohibited by any student or visitor on or off the grounds of the hostel.

Travel

AHL will liaise with Centrelink at the end of each term to discuss travel arrangements.

ABSTUDY entitles students to travel between home and the hostel, however, it does not cover travel to other locations. Please contact Centrelink directly if you have any questions about student travel entitlements.

If families require their child to travel home at other times during the school term, they will need to pay the fare.

ABSTUDY can support families visiting the students at the hostel. Please talk to the Head of Boarding to see what is possible.



Hostel expectations

Our hostel expectations have been created to ensure the hostel is a place where students can live and study in safety and comfort, and in harmony with other young people and staff.

We have some easy to follow expectations to make sure all our students, staff and visitors feel safe and respected in the hostel.



Respectful behaviour

We expect all staff, students and visitors to the hostel to be respectful at all times.

- Violence, harassment, bullying and vandalism will not be tolerated.
- Swearing and the use of offensive or abusive language will not be tolerated.
- Indecent behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Students are expected to be well mannered and courteous at all times to staff, other students, visitors and the broader community.
- Students need to follow the directions of staff at all times.

Responsibilities within the hostel

- Students are expected to observe and follow the hostel timetable.
- Students are expected to carry out their rostered duties.
- Students are expected to attend homework sessions provided at the school.
- Students should advise staff if they are unable to attend the dining room during meal time and require a meal to be put aside.
- Intimate relationships between students are not permitted.

Visitors

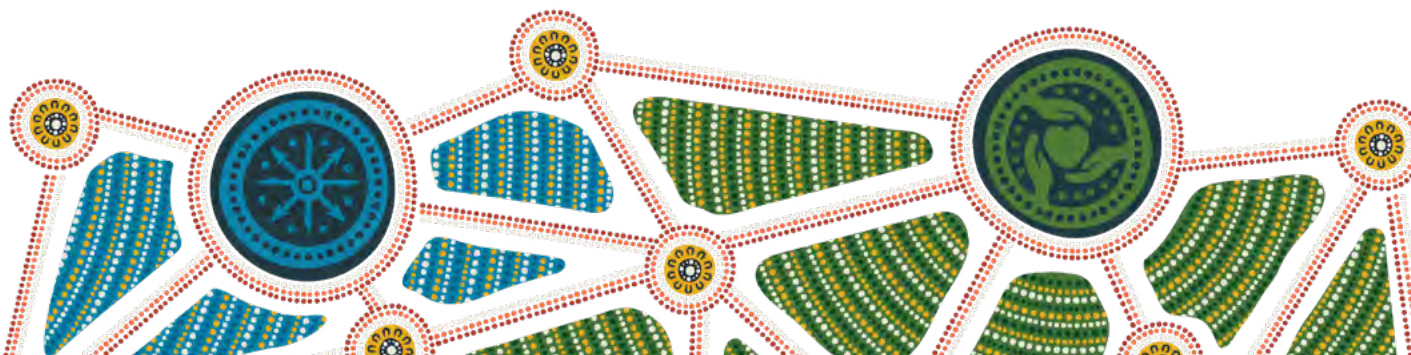
- Prior notice must be provided to the Head of Boarding and all visitors must be signed in.
- Visitors are unable to stay overnight.
- Visitors are not to enter student rooms.

Clothing and uniforms

- Students must wear school uniform to school.
- Students must be dressed for meal times.
- Students are expected to dress appropriately for weekend activities.

Drug-free, alcohol-free and smoke-free environment

- Drinking of alcohol, use of illegal drugs and smoking, including vapes, will not be permitted on or offsite while boarding at AHL. Any students found in the possession of, or under the influence of, alcohol or drugs, may be excluded from the hostel.
- Misuse of prescription drugs, or other substance abuse, is not permitted. Aerosol cans are not permitted.



Property and equipment

- Students are expected to look after their own property and respect the property of others.
- Hostel equipment must not be misused or abused. If students damage equipment or furniture, other than through fair wear and tear, the cost of replacement or repair will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian or student.
- The hostel will not take responsibility for loss, damage or theft of a student's personal property or valuables.
- Use of any other electrical appliance in the students' bedrooms or the bathrooms, other than those appliances supplied, must be approved by hostel staff.
- Written consent must be provided by the parents/guardians prior to the student being allowed to spend weekends away from the hostel.
- The parent/guardian must submit a request for weekend leave to the Head of Boarding on the Wednesday prior to the weekend of leave. The request must include the name of the approved adult/person collecting the student and their contact details. The adult must come to the hostel and sign out the student after 4pm on Friday and return the student to the hostel by 5pm on Sunday.
- Students must report to the Head of Boarding/Residential Youth Worker on duty when leaving the hostel and return by the specified time agreed. The student must fill in the hostel sign out book on departing the hostel and sign in on their return.

Leave and absences

If leave is required for a student during a school term, the parent/guardian must gain prior agreement from the Head of Boarding and be mindful of the impact the leave may have on the student's commitment for education and other commitments.

- Unauthorised leave is not permitted and will incur a formal warning to the student.
- If a student leaves the hostel without authorisation and is away for more than 24 hours, they will only be allowed to return to the hostel at the discretion of AHL and will be placed on a probationary period.
- If ABSTUDY travel is required to support cultural leave, the parent/guardian will need to provide a letter at least five days prior from the community clinic, council office, school principal or an Elder to ensure the Head of Boarding can book the travel through ABSTUDY.

**'Thanks
for looking
after us.'**

– AHL Student

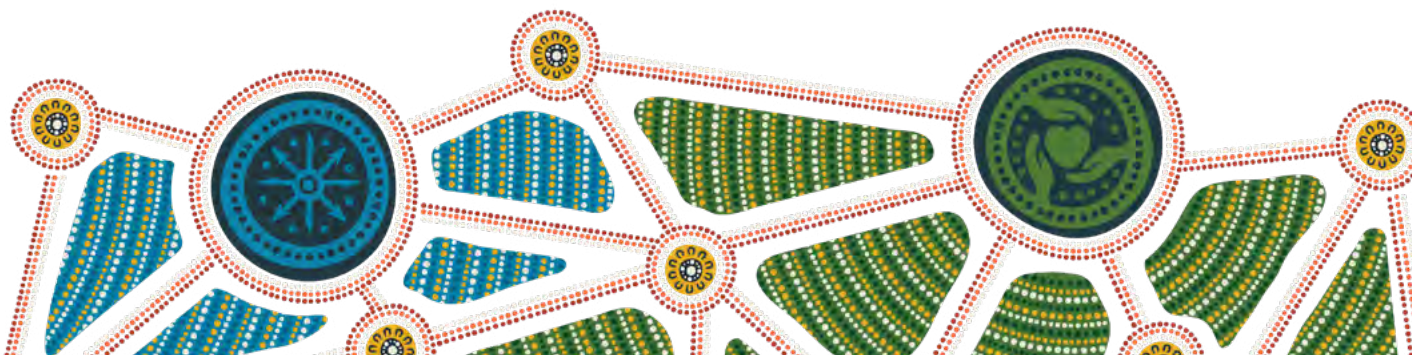


Acting within the law

- If a student becomes involved with the police, AHL will assess their ongoing suitability to board at the hostel.
- Stealing within or outside the hostel, including shoplifting, is not tolerated.

Disciplinary action

- We will engage with parents/guardians if behavioural issues need to be addressed.
- At times, students may be placed on a Student Behavioural Support Plan to identify supports and strategies to get their behaviour back on track.
- If a student is suspended from school for inappropriate behaviour more than twice in one year, we will consider whether the student is suitable to continue boarding with AHL.
- Students can be sent home for inappropriate behaviour at the school or hostel at the discretion of AHL. In the first instance, the student will be questioned about the inappropriate behaviour with their parent/guardian on the phone, and may receive an official warning.
- Parents or guardians will be responsible for all travel costs associated with students who are sent home for any reason as part of disciplinary action.
- AHL may decide to exclude a student from the hostel on a case-by-case basis in the event of a serious incident or following a number of warnings.





We look forward to welcoming our new students to their home away from home.

FIND OUT MORE



ahl.gov.au



02 6212 2001



PO Box 30, Woden ACT 2606