

# STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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| Approving Authority                 | Academic Board   |
| Responsible Officer                 | Dean of Students   |
| Version                             | 1.2 Reformatting Principal approved 5 <sup>th</sup> October 2020   |
| Next Scheduled Review               | Oct 2023   |
| Related Legislation and Regulations | Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 Standards 1 and 2<br>National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities & Providers of Education & Training to Overseas Students 2018. Standard 6<br>Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 Clauses 1.7, 5.4 and 6.1 to 6.6   |
| Associated Documents                | Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure<br>Grievance Handling Policy and Procedure<br>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy<br>Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure<br>Equity and Diversity Policy and Procedure<br>Students at Risk Policy and Procedure<br>Student Orientation, Retention and Progression Policy and Procedure<br>Student Code of Conduct Policy<br>Privacy Policy<br>Well and Safe Modules<br>SASH Modules<br>Academic Integrity Modules |

## 1 SCOPE

This policy applies to all ACCS faculty and staff in relation to the provision of quality services and support to students. It includes aspects pertaining to finance, learning and academics as well as welfare issues of relationships, individual and group interaction and intolerance of abuse.

This policy is applicable to all students.

## 2 PURPOSE

The policy and procedures aim to ensure students are informed of the accessibility and availability of support and the support staff, in particular if required the Student Counsellor, for consultation and assistance.

Where there are issues or grievances, every effort will be made by the College to address these as expeditiously as possible, with due regard to natural justice and in a spirit of understanding, compassion and integrity without compromising the academic standards or Christian ethos of the College.

## 3 DEFINITIONS

**Student support services:** Are services that provide academic or participation support should it be necessary in order to assist students to realise their academic potential and maximise the benefits of their selected course.

**Reasonable support is:**

- a) services provided which are necessary to ensure all students have the opportunity to engage in their studies to achieve their academic potential.
- b) comparable to a need without placing an unwarranted burden on the provider of the service.

## 4 POLICY/PROCEDURE STATEMENT

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This Policy aims to outline the reasonable and ongoing support services in place to assist students to achieve their academic potential and applicable learning knowledge and skill development.

The Dean of Students is to provide a basic advisory service to all students seeking advice or experiencing difficulties inclusive of aspects of an academic or personal nature.

In addition to basic support for international students help them access study support and welfare-related services such as for no referral cost, however, the student is responsible for any cost of services in addition to what the College provides. Advice and assistance include:

- Legal Services
- Accommodation
- Emergency and Health Services
- Facilities and
- Complaints and appeals processes
- Student visa conditions

Information and College requirements are provided during orientation and on the College Learning Management System which provides relevant documentation and modules for training.

### Procedures

1. **Orientation of New Students** – The first day of each trimester is set aside for orientation of new students. All information provided is also on Moodle and all students are required to complete the Module should they not be able to attend either virtually or in person. In addition to operational expectations and support services expectations for interacting within the College community are outlined. These expectations are for all interaction, in class and online.
2. **Compulsory Modules** for SASH, Well and Safe students and Academic Integrity are provided for completion within the first weeks of study.
3. **A Student Handbook** is available to all students which addresses in detail matters concerning College life. It is located on the Student Information Page on the Moodle portal.
4. **Assistance in Developing Learning Skills**  
The College requires all students to complete the subject Critical Thinking and Writing Skills (TA7101) unless evidence is provided that appropriate skills have been developed through prior courses of study. The subject assists students to develop skills in study and academic expression that will facilitate all subsequent studies. Topics covered in this subject may include, learning and motivation, time management, active study, academic reading – previewing, scanning, skimming, assessing, analysing; academic writing – background research, purpose, content, structure, presentation of papers; writing reviews and reports; referencing and handling examinations.

### 5. Academic Support

Academic support is available to each student via direct consultation, telephone and email communication with the relevant lecturer or the Faculty Head. Assistance with administrative matters is available to each student via direct consultation, phone and email communication with the College Registrar/Dean of Students.

Students are encouraged to discuss academic essay writing and correct referencing as well as any current academic issue that may need clarification and assistance with the relevant lecturer or Faculty Head.

The Dean of Students is responsible for the maintenance of an Academic Support List. The list is updated at the commencement of each trimester based on the previous trimester marks of each student and in consultation with lecturers and each Faculty Head. Students on the list may be invited to participate in a series of tutorial sessions, either on-line or face to face, with their Faculty Head during which issues of academic concern are discussed and appropriate assistance provided.

Students are provided English language assistance through the assistance of an English Language Tutor and academic writing and referencing assistance through the relevant Faculty Head.

## **6. Online learning support**

Support for online learners is in conjunction with all forms of support outlined. Faculty and staff are aware of the need to maintain all standards of communication, privacy and respect for their own liaison and interaction with students and also between students. The PEER resources provided by TEQSA for the provision of a safe online learning environment is also applicable to ACCS.

## **7. Course Progression Review**

Students are to consult with their respective Faculty Head prior to each subject enrolment so as to ensure that their subject selections conform with their course progression. The student in consultation with the Faculty Head decides on a progression plan for their study for each semester and this progression plan is recorded on the "Record of Progress" document. A copy of each student's record of progress is maintained by the Dean of Students and the Faculty Head and updated for each subject enrolment.

## **8. Lecturer's Student Evaluations**

After the date of presentation of the first assessment task lecturers may submit an evaluation of students who they deem are at academic risk at a regular Faculty meeting.

Any action deemed necessary by the faculty is monitored by the lecturer and the Dean of Academics. Actions may include the adoption of a more formalised "student at risk" and "academic support" procedures.

## **9. Professional/vocational aptitude**

The purpose of ACCS is to provide academic and practical training that will enhance a student's capacity to successfully enter the career or vocation commensurate with their course of study.

Should the college become aware of circumstances that may mitigate against a student's successful participation in the career or vocation associated with their course of studies the following protocol will apply:

- A cause for concern is to be documented in the first instance by the Dean of Students.
- The Dean of Students will report the cause for concern to the Faculty Executive.
- The Principal, or designated staff representative, will interview the student.
- On the basis of the cause for concern, the student may be advised to withdraw from further studies at ACCS in which case the student will receive full credit for study undertaken.
- Alternatively, a professional/vocational assistance process may be offered to the student with the intention of developing skills and aptitudes considered necessary for the student's future success.
- If deemed necessary, the Principal will submit a report of the interview and outcome to the ACCS Academic Board with a recommendation for any further action.
- Should the Academic Board recommend that the student may be at risk of not having the aptitude suitable for the career or vocation in question, the student may be requested to withdraw from further studies at ACCS.
- The College Principal will notify the student of this decision.
- The student will be offered professional and or vocational counselling.
- The student has the right of appeal in accordance with the ACCS Grievance Handling Procedure.

## **10. Financial Matters**

Students financial capability to support themselves during studies is discussed at the initial application interview. Students are presented with information about student and course related fees, available student concessions; budgeting; access to student welfare services; and balancing work and study. Throughout each semester, students are able to seek assistance on financial matters from the Registrar. Every effort will be made to accommodate students with financial difficulties.

### **11. Counselling**

Students are encouraged to discuss matters related to College life with faculty members. Where personal problems are of concern to students, a Counsellor and chaplain are available at the College, although for problems unrelated to their College studies, students are normally advised to seek help through their own churches or through appointments with professionals outside the College.

Where problems directly relate to courses or subjects, students are encouraged to directly contact the lecturers/faculty-head concerned or the Dean of Students, who may offer help or suggest alternative avenues of help. Lecturer contact information is included on all Subject Information Booklets to assist students. Senior students may be assigned to assist junior students with study difficulties, as necessary.

### **12. Student Life and communication**

All students have access to the Student Handbook at the commencement of his/her course of study through the Student Page on Moodle. This document outlines student's rights and responsibilities and includes details of assessment arrangements, student support and other information in regard to College life in general.

Accurate course information is accessible on the College website. Students are also given details of the progression of their course to assist with enrolment in correct subjects.

Important changes or additions are advised to students via social media, email and /or the website.

### **13. Notification of results**

The College will notify students of academic results as soon as practicable, and in any case, not later than two calendar months, after the end of the relevant semester, together with advice of their eligibility to continue with further studies and/or to graduate. Students have access to all their subject results via the Student Page on the ACCS website.

### **14. Personal Issues**

Students with personal problems should consult the Student Counsellor who will make every effort to help resolve the matter in question and/or arrange referrals where needed. Where appropriate, students will be referred to their local pastors.

### **15. Relational problems**

Students with relational problems should consult the Student Counsellor who will make every effort to help resolve the matter in question and/or arrange referrals where needed. If this is not possible or appropriate (for example, in the absence of the Student Counsellor), students should consult another staff or faculty member. Where appropriate, students will be referred to their local pastors.

### **16. Students with specific disadvantages**

Where necessary, the College faculty, through the Dean of Students, provides special additional support and direction to students of non-English-speaking cultural background, students who are from socially disadvantaged background, and students with poor literacy skills. The College is also committed to accommodating students who have physical disabilities and related needs. Support Services are provided in the form of extra time for completing assessments, special tutoring or any specific support for physical disability as College resources permit.

## 17. Student safety

The personal well-being and safety of on campus and online students is taken seriously by the College. The following actions will be rigorously applied:

Should any student consider that their personal well-being or safety is comprised while on campus the student is to immediately notify the Dean of Students or the College Principal. The student's confidentiality will be safeguarded if the report is of a private or personal nature. Appropriate action will be taken by the College to ensure the well-being and safety of the student.

On-line students who consider their personal well-being or safety is compromised by inappropriate on-line communication by a member of the College staff or another student are to report their concern immediately to the Dean of Students or the Principal. The College will respond immediately to the report to ensure the preservation of privacy and online security for each ACCS student.

ACCS considers any form of sexual harassment or assault, whether physical or verbal, as totally unacceptable. Any student who feels they are a victim of such harassment or assault by a fellow student or member of the college staff, has the right to immediately notify the Principal, another senior member of the college staff, or the College Counsellor. The protection and privacy of the reporting student will be treated as a priority. Specific processes and actions to be taken commensurate with the report are detailed in the ACCS SASH policy.

## 18. Grievance procedures

All grievances should follow the procedures laid down in ACCS' Grievance Handling Policy.

### For policy management:

Academic – The Academic Dean and The Dean of Studies

Student Services – The Dean of Students/ Registrar

1. 1.1 Student responsibilities include:
  - a. ensuring the appropriate staff or faculty at the College are aware of need
  - b. participating in orientation events and completing the required modules
  - c. making use of student support services should they be required and or recommended.
  
2. 2.1 College staff and Faculty responsibilities include:
  - a. the orientation presented for all new students at the commencement of each trimester.
  - b. new students complete the modules for safety and well being
  - c. ensuring students with academic needs are supported
  - d. ensuring students are provided information on the Code of Conduct, Rights, Responsibilities and various related policies.
  - e. supporting new students to settle successfully into the course, inclusive of those with differing educational and cultural background, entry pathway, mode or place of study
  - f. ensuring College website, Moodle and handbook provide students with information on student support services and relevant staff contacts to access reasonable support services
  - g. promoting a safe environment and advising students on appropriate actions to ensure they are safe and secure in both campus and online environments
  
3. The Student Support Officer and Student Well and safe Committee is responsible for:
  - a. It is the responsibility of Student Support Officers to respond to student enquiries and the Student Contact Officer to be a first contact for students. Where student enquiries or needs are beyond the scope of training, knowledge or experience of the Student Support Officer they must seek advice from the Registrar.
  - b. Student Support Officers shall be responsible for initiating the Critical Incident procedures if they have deemed it a Critical Incident.
  - c. Student Support Officers shall maintain a written record of any critical incident and remedial action taken by the registered provider for at least two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student.

- d. Student Support Officers must update student management system for each enquiry and all documentation is to be filed in the student's file.
- e. Student Support Officers must ensure that any written response to a student enquiry is generated from the Student Management System, so it has a contact log and a copy of the information sent. No verbal outcomes are to be acceptable practice by ACCS staff.
- f. Responsibility for briefing all staff of obligations under the ESOS Framework and National Code Standards and the implications of these for students lie with senior staff.
- g. Day to day responsibility for the oversight and management of student welfare support services lies with the Registrar.
- h. The Principal will have overall responsibility for this policy and the ensuing procedures.
- i. The day-to-day management of implementing the policy is the responsibility of the Registrar of other designated staff, to whom the Student Support staff report.

#### Online safety

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/young-people>

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/key-issues/esafety-guide>

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/educators/toolkit-schools>

## 5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This policy acknowledges the following resources:

#### TEQSA Guidance Sheets:

- [Governance](#)
- [Diversity and Equity](#)
- [Nested Courses](#)
- [Technology-Enhanced Learning](#)
- [Work-Integrated Learning](#)
- [Wellbeing and Safety](#)