Southern Academy of Higher Education (SAHE)

Student Support Services Policy

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1. Policy Statement

The Student Support Services Policy (the 'Policy') provides a framework of support for international students to adjust to higher education study and life in Australia, and for domestic students to adjust to higher education studies. The framework aims to support students to achieve their learning goals and maintain satisfactory progress toward meeting all learning outcomes at the Southern Academy of Higher Education ('SAHE' or the 'Academy'). The Policy also meets the requirements of Standard 6 of the National Code 2018.

1.1 Definitions

For definitions, please refer to the '*Dictionary of Terms*'.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all students enrolled at SAHE.

3. Policy Principles

SAHE values its students and will provide an appropriate level of support to facilitate the completion of their program of study.
SAHE will:
a. train staff to recognise the need for and to provide appropriate student support;
b. ensure students are supported to have equivalent access to opportunities for successful transition and progression through their program of study, irrespective of their educational background or entry pathway;
c. have effective procedures in place for the disclosure of information about students, which comply with privacy legislation;
d. have in place effective procedures for dealing with student incidents.
e. ensure accurate and current information on student support services and new student orientation is made available to every student via direct (emails) and indirect communication (website, Learning Management System).
f. ensure that students have access to learning support services consistent with the requirements of their program and mode of study, and with the learning needs of individual students and student cohorts.
g. ensure that students are made aware of their rights and responsibilities.
h. Ensure students have avenues to provide feedback (including confidential feedback) to SAHE

4. SAHE Support Services

4.1 Student Orientation Program

SAHE requires all commencing and newly enrolled students to undertake the Student Orientation Program which provides them with essential information for their studies and other aspects of student life at SAHE. The Student Orientation Program includes comprehensive and tailored presentations that address the needs of the students for their successful transition to the Academy's academic, social and administrative functions. The orientation presentations include relevant information on adjusting to life in Australia, dealing with personal/health challenges and relevant general advice regarding financial management. For further details please refer to the *Student Orientation Policy*.

4.2 Library and Information Services

The SAHE Library has a wide range of relevant and current learning resources. Library information sessions are held during the Student Orientation Program. Additional workshops are scheduled throughout the year to assist students to effectively utilise the range of library resources and available electronic databases and become efficient and productive information researchers. Students can search the recommended and prescribed resources or email the Learning Support Manager for resources and information services. Students can also access databases, journals, e-books and additional e-resources through third-party providers including access to IT facilities and required/relevant software applications. For further details please refer to the *Library and Information Services Plan & the Student Orientation Policy* respectively.

4.3 Mature Age Students

a. SAHE will provide free Returning to Learning workshop sessions specifically designed for mature age students run by the Learning Support Manager.
b. The Returning to Learning workshops will run before the teaching session begins and will be designed for students returning to learning after a significant break from education.
c. The Returning to Learning workshops will be available as an online resource so that students can complete them at their own pace and if necessary once the teaching session has begun, and return to this resource during their studies.
d. Additionally, the SAHE library will conduct orientation at the beginning of each teaching session. The library orientation will include information on (including but not limited to):
  i.   how to utilise available library resources effectively and the Learning Management System (LMS) during the program of study;
  ii. how to find key and recommended texts and online journal articles;
  iii. how to scrutinise/validate information on the web; and
  iv. support services providing a range of assistance throughout the students' study cycle.

4.4 English Language Support

SAHE students will be supported from point of entry to graduation by an integrated and scaffolded approach to English language proficiency that is systematically incorporated into curriculum design, assessment practices and unit delivery. SAHE will offer language support services that will provide students with the opportunity to practice, and build confidence in, their English language skills. For further details please refer to the *English Language Proficiency Policy*.

4.5 Numeracy Skills Support

a. SAHE will provide a safe and supportive environment for students to develop the mathematical confidence and numeracy skills needed to succeed in their program of study.
b. Students who do not have a background in mathematics or have been granted of credit for prior learning will be required to complete the free Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on mathematics.
c. The Learning Support Manager will conduct regular numeracy workshops throughout the year to help students at all levels of study and skill to revise or consolidate their

understanding of various numeracy topics and develop their mathematical and numeracy literacy.

4.6 Student Consultation Services

SAHE will offer online and face-to-face support including group and individual consultation services to provide targeted assistance with academic, communication and learning needs. A *Student Consultation Schedule* will be provided with details on how students may contact the relevant staff. The *Student Consultation Schedule* will be published on SAHE Learning Management System (LMS) at the beginning of each semester. The *Student Consultation Schedule* will also be available to students at the Administration Office and on student noticeboards. For further details please refer to the *Student Consultation Policy*.

4.7 Counselling Services

SAHE will have a qualified counsellor trained to work with students on matters of concern. Students are encouraged to access the free, confidential counselling services by appointment only. Support is provided in the following areas:
a. transition to higher education studies;
b. motivational support;
c. short term, solution-focused counselling;
d. referral to specialist services outside of SAHE.

4.8 Academic Support Services

SAHE students' academic progress and attendance will be monitored in accordance with the *Academic Progression and Graduation Policy*. Guidance and support through consultation will be provided where unsatisfactory results or issues related to academic literacy and English language proficiency are identified. The student support for progression through the program will be tailored to the needs of student cohorts. SAHE will assess the needs and preparedness of individual students and cohorts and provide tailored support. This assessment will ensure that students have equivalent opportunities for a successful transition into and progression through their program of study.

The Learning Support Manager and Program Manager(s) will provide advice and guidance, or referral, where required. SAHE will offer the following Academic support services as appropriate:
a. Academic skills workshops offered by academic staff to help new and continuing students with strategies to improve their academic performance;
b. In Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) in which students will work with other students to understand the content of unit/s and develop academic skills and build confidence and communication skills;
c. Academic Integrity Module (AIM) to implement a range of strategies to support and enhance student academic integrity. AIM is a compulsory module for all students commencing studies at SAHE to assist and guide students on the rules, procedures and ethical behaviour associated with academic integrity at the start of each study period and from thereon on an ongoing basis throughout each study period;
d. Individual learning plans for students at risk of unsatisfactory progress.

4.9 Early Intervention

    a.   Early intervention is a process for identifying students who are at risk of failing to make satisfactory academic progress. The student will be identified as being 'at risk' through:
- i.   the formative assessment tasks are undertaken throughout the unit of study in a semester; and/or
- ii.   the end of semester results;

    b.   The primary focus of the formative assessment tasks is to provide immediate and meaningful feedback to students on their academic progress and strategies for improvement.

    c.   The 'at risk' students will receive an email notification advising them to undertake certain activities to help improve their academic performance. These may include:
- i.   academic consultation and group workshops;
- ii.   English language support workshops; or
- iii.   personal academic counselling sessions
- iv.   development of individual learning plan.

For further details please refer to the *Academic Progression and Graduation Policy.*

4.10 Reasonable Adjustment for Special Needs and Disabilities Support

The nature and extent of support services available to students on campus and off-campus are informed by the specific requirements of each student as they progress through their studies. Support includes mental health support, and adjustments for disability, safety and wellbeing. Students are encouraged to inform the Student Services Manager at the time of enrolment, and throughout their studies, if they have any special needs or a disability that may affect their learning at SAHE. Appropriate support will be provided for students with disabilities or health conditions by:

    a.   consulting with students with a disability to identify reasonable adjustments that may be required to facilitate their access to and participation in the program of study on the same basis as students without a disability;

    b.   making reasonable adjustments and/or tailoring individual study plans or providing exam assistance when informed and supported by professional medical documentation, so all students can participate in all learning activities;

    c.   ensuring adjustments to assessments for students with disabilities are made in such a way as to ensure the primary nature of the assessments remains the same;

    d.   ensuring adjustments to examinations for students with disabilities are made to provide students with a fair opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and proficiency for assessment purposes.

    e.   providing all students a learning environment free from harassment and discrimination, and clear remedial processes if a student believes they are being harassed, bullied or discriminated against;

    f.   referring students to disability support services, counsellors and medical services offered by the government.

Students may apply for reasonable adjustment in accordance with the *Assessment Policy and Procedure* if they require any special arrangements in assessments and examinations.

4.11 Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

The Academy provides alternative entry, assistance and support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. From admissions to graduation, the assistance available includes academic workshops, access to mentors and additional support from academic staff. The services provided include:

a. Additional Academic Support – to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to receive support in relation to academic skills such as academic writing, effective study techniques and research skills through the Learning Support Manager. SAHE is committed to ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students receive learning plans prior to commencement, targeted support and/or mentoring from staff and peers including a formalised peer 'buddy' system

b. Learning Support – to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students develop various study strategies and learning skills to improve their academic performance.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders students will also have access to workshops, webinars symposia and other individual and group support activities available through SAHE's membership of [Indigenous Education & Boarding Australia](#).

4.12 The Learning Support Manager

The Learning Support Manager provides regular workshops, covering topics such as academic, essay and report writing, referencing, avoiding plagiarism and other academic integrity issues, effective library research, good time management, effective exam preparation, and stress management. Other topics are covered as required, to help students to improve their performance. Additionally, the Learning Support Manager is available for individual counselling with students following staff referral or self-referral by students. Appointments can be made in person, by email or at the campus reception desk.

4.13 Campus Safety and Well-being

SAHE is committed to providing a safe and healthy study environment for all its students. SAHE will provide support services to ensure student safety and enhance student wellbeing. SAHE will:

a. provide a range of support services including referrals to specialised counselling and welfare;

b. provide self-paced learning modules and online resources for students to build an understanding of issues impacting student wellbeing, including healthy eating, mental health and issues of consent;

c. manage the Academy's built environment including design and facility maintenance.

Students are also required to familiarise themselves with the emergency evacuation map and procedures. For further details on emergency contacts and procedures on reporting and managing hazards and incidents please refer to the *Critical Incident and Emergency Management Policy* and *Work, Health and Safety Policy*.

4.14 Work Rights

At the Student Orientation Program, all students will be given an overview of their student visa conditions, including work limitations, ATO legislation, Tax File Number, Fair Work Ombudsman, etc.

4.15 Student Grievances

For details, please refer to the *Student Grievance Management Policy and Procedure.*

5. Student Feedback

SAHE values student feedback and is committed to providing opportunities for all students to offer feedback on their educational experiences. Formal evaluations and surveys together with informal feedback and consultations will be used to enhance the quality of teaching, learning and the student experience.

5.1 Student Satisfaction Survey
   a. The student satisfaction survey will be administered annually to students to evaluate the level of satisfaction with various student support areas and services at SAHE.
   b. The data collected will be used to identify aspects of the Academy's operation and services that are either performing effectively or need improvement.
   c. The survey may include sections on:
      i. overall satisfaction;
      ii. support services;
      iii. learning environment;
      iv. academic learning support;
      v. campus experience;
      vi. other topics as relevant.

5.2 Student Feedback on Units and Teaching
   a. Student evaluation of all units of study and teaching will be gathered using internal surveys and/or informal feedback from students.
   b. The purpose of the feedback on units of study will inform future content and design, learning guides, teaching methods, assessment processes and teaching materials.
   c. Student evaluation of teaching will assist individual teaching staff to reflect upon and improve their teaching - targeting areas for development and improvement.

6. Review

The Academy will undertake an ongoing review of the support services offered at SAHE through the following process:
   a. the academic and administrative staff are responsible for the delivery of student surveys;
   b. the Dean will review the surveys, analyse the feedback and summarise any issues raised regarding support services;
   c. the Dean will meet formally with the Executive Management Team to discuss any issues raised and to formulate possible strategies for improvement;
   d. the Executive Management Team will regularly review the availability and accessibility of the support services and action enhancements and improvements where necessary.

Version Control

Version	v1.4
Review	The Academic Board will review this Policy in accordance with the Southern Academy of Higher Education *Policy Documents Review Schedule*.
Approving Body	Academic Board
Approval and Effective Date	4 May 2023
Policy Custodian	Dean
Policy Contact	Dean
Higher Education Standards Frameworks (Threshold Standard) 2021 (Cth)	B1.1 "Higher Education Provider" Category Standard 2.1; ss 3 Standard 2.3; ss 1 – 5 Standard 2.4; ss 1 – 5 Standard 3.2; ss 5 Standard 6.1; ss Standard 6.2; ss Standard 7.2; ss 1 – 4 Standard 7.3; ss 1
Benchmarking Institutes	University of New South Wales University of Technology Sydney University of Southern Queensland The University of Sydney Western Sydney University Kaplan Business School Australia

Related Document	Academic Progression and Graduation Policy
	Assessment Policy and Procedure
	Critical Incident and Emergency Management Policy
	Dictionary of Terms
	English Language Proficiency Policy
	Library and Information Services Plan
	Student Consultation Policy
	Student Grievance Management Policy and Procedure
	Student Orientation Policy
	Work, Health and Safety Policy
Related Legislation	The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
	Higher Education Standards Framework 2021
	Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000