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| Title | AHE Student Academic and Non-Academic Support Policy and Procedure |
| Code | APo10 |
| Approving Body | Academic Board |
| TEQSA Provider ID | PRV14320 |
| CRICOS Registration No: | TBA |
| Developer | CEO/ Executive Dean |
| Date Approved | 7 September 2021 |
| Commencement Date | 7 September 2021 |
| Date of Review | September 2022 |
| Distribution | All stakeholders |
| Purpose | Apex Higher Education (AHE) ensures that appropriate student academic and non-academic support are provided to assist students in completing their studies and reaching their academic goals. |
| Scope | Applies to all aspects of AHE |

1. Principles of supporting students at AHE

- 1.1 To ensure that students are made aware of academic and non-academic support available at AHE, all students are informed about AHE's student support at during their Orientation, have a copy of the **AHE Student Handbook**, and that this information is on the **AHE website** and also posted on AHE Student Noticeboards.
- 1.2 Staff at AHE are required to understand their responsibilities in providing students with support and, where necessary, refer the student to other staff at AHE or externally for appropriate advice. All academic and non-academic staff will be provided with a copy of AHE's policies and procedures, and incoming staff are inducted concerning student support at AHE in accordance with the **AHE Staff Employment, Review and Professional Development Procedure**.
- 1.3 AHE is committed to ensuring that all teaching staff are available for face-to-face and online student consultation during each study period (including Mid-Semester Study Week, Study Week and the Examination and Assessment Week). This Policy and Procedure also outlines the mechanism by which all teaching staff (including permanent and sessional staff) will make themselves available to assist students with academic matters outside scheduled class times.
- 1.4 Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students: AHE provides additional assistance and support to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students throughout their journey at AHE by ensuring each student is identified and mentored by a Student Services Office throughout their study at AHE for regular face-to-face support meetings. AHE can also provide external services referrals and tutorial assistance. For information on assistance available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders refer to the **AHE Student Handbook**.

- 1.5 All meetings with AHE staff are at no cost to the student, including academic and non-academic support.

2. Academic support

Students can gain advice and support to ensure they achieve appropriate academic progression, attendance, and general support to ensure they achieve satisfactory results in their studies.

All students' progress and attendance are monitored. Student attendance is taken by each lecturer for every lecture/ tutorial/ seminar taught and entered into the learning management system. The information is used by the Course Coordinator to trigger relevant student support for those students who are identified as having low attendance. Guidance and support will be provided by AHE for issues identified in accordance with the **AHE Student Academic Progression Procedure** as low attendance is correlated with issues such as unsatisfactory academic results, poor course progression, or academic literacy and English language proficiency.

Student attendance is taken by each lecturer for every lecture/ tutorial/ seminar taught and entered into the learning management system. The information is used by AHE to trigger relevant student support for those students who are identified as having attendance. Guidance and support will be provided by AHE for issues identified in accordance with the **AHE Student Academic Progression Procedure** including unsatisfactory results, course progression, or issues related to academic literacy and English language proficiency are identified.

2.1 Availability of teaching staff for student consultation

2.1.1 Face-to-face consultation

- a. All teaching staff (including permanent and sessional staff) will make themselves available during the study period they are teaching for one hour per week for student consultation for each unit they are teaching in order to allow students to consult on issues related specifically to those units of study. Sessional staff are remunerated for these consultation hours.
- b. As relevant, academic staff may refer students to seek assistance from other non-academic staff for non-academic support e.g. the SSO and LSO.
- c. Teaching staff must advise and gain approval from the Course Coordinator of their proposed consultation hours at the beginning of each study period they teach.

2.1.2 Advising students of availability

- a. Consultation times for each study period for each individual member of the teaching staff will be published in the **Unit Student Study Guide** for any units of study that they are teaching.
- b. Consultation times for each study period for each individual member of the teaching staff will also be published in the AHE Student Noticeboards and on the learning management system e.g. Moodle.

2.1.3 Course Coordinators

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- a. Course Coordinators can assist where students have concerns concerning academic issues including their attendance, academic performance or other related issues that are placing them at risk of not achieving the requirements of their course.

2.1.4 Online consultation

- a. Students are provided with access to email addresses of support and teaching staff, and Moodle access, to facilitate asynchronous communications with AHE. Students are encouraged to utilise email or Moodle to contact teaching staff outside scheduled consultation times, where appropriate. The contact email address for teaching staff will be published in each **Unit Student Study Guide** for the units of study that they are teaching.
- b. Teaching staff are required to respond to online communication from students within three business days. Where a significant issue arises from email or Moodle communication, the staff member should make every effort to meet the student face-to-face or by telephone as soon as possible to discuss the matter.

2.2 Availability of non-teaching staff for academic matters

- a. The Student Services Officer (SSO) is the first point of contact for any non-academic issues faced by students. This is also the designated student contact officer for emergency purposes. The SSO may also be accessed for academic issue who may refer the student to academic staff as relevant. The SSO is available at Reception/ by phone/ by email as per the below:

Student Services Officer (SSO)
 Designated student contact officer
 8 am – 5 pm Monday to Friday at Reception. Additional hours: open till 9 pm if evening classes are held; open during the weekend if classes are held
 Phone: 02 – 8007 6262
 Email (24/7 for response within 24 hours): studentsupport1@ahe.edu.au
Emergency Contact: CEO/Executive Dean: Mobile 0420 386 862
Note: contact details are indicative at this stage

- b. The Librarian/ Learning Support Office (LSO) is the first point of contact for support for developing academic skills and English Language support. The LSO is available at the Library / by phone/ by email as per the below. Please refer to the AHE Student Academic Progression Procedure, Section 2.4 **Academic Literacy and English Language Proficiency** concerning how students can be supported at AHE concerning academic skills and English Language support.

Librarian/Learning Support Officer (LSO) and the Library/ Learning Centre
 8 am – 5 pm Monday to Friday
 Additional hours: open till 9 pm if evening classes are held;
 open during the weekend if classes are held
 Phone: 02 – 8007 xxxx
 Email (24/7 for response within 24 hours): learningsupport1@ahe.edu.au
Note: contact details are indicative at this stage

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- c. Support staff are also available to assist students in a range of non-academic matters as detailed in the **AHE Student Handbook**.
- d. The CEO/ Executive Dean and other non- academic AHE staff are available for student consultation by appointment.

3. Non-Academic Support

3.1 Nominated Student Services Officer (SSO)

- 3.1.1 While all staff employed by AHE have the responsibility to provide support to students, AHE shall nominate a dedicated Student Services Officer who will be available to all students, on an appointment basis, during AHE's hours of operation.

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| <p style="text-align: center;">Student Services Officer (SSO) Designated student contact officer 8 am – 5 pm Monday to Friday at Reception. Additional hours: open till 9 pm if evening classes are held; open during the weekend if classes are held Phone: 02 – 8007 6262 Email (24/7 for response within 24 hours): studentsupport1@ahe.edu.au <u>Emergency Contact: CEO/Executive Dean: Mobile 0420 386 862</u> <u>Note: contact details are indicative at this stage</u></p> |
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- 3.1.2 Students may access the Student Services Officer (SSO) directly or via Reception desk to organise an appointment. Details of the SSO including name, location and how to contact them will stay posted on AHE Student Noticeboards and on Moodle.
- 3.1.3 The Student Services Officer ensures up-to-date information is available for student support services and that any information on referrals and contacts provided are current. This information is given to students as part of the Orientation program.

3.2 Student support and well-being services

Details of the Student Services Officer (SSO) including name, location and how to contact them will be posted on Student Noticeboards and on the learning management system e.g. Moodle.

The SSO will be responsible for maintaining a list of support services, including the details.

Steps for accessing the SSO and receiving support:

- a) Student contacts the SSO by email/ in person at Reception / phone.
- b) SSO will contact student within 24 hours for a meeting. Students who require more immediate assistance will be prioritised, including being referred to other AHE staff as relevant.
- c) SSO meets with student. For all meetings with the Student Support Officers or any staff member of AHE, notes will be taken for the students file in AHE's Student Management System. If the staff member believes that another person should be present due to the circumstances of the meeting (including another person nominated by the student to support the student) the student will be informed before the meeting. The outcome of the interview will be communicated to the student in writing (email).

- d) All meetings with AHE staff are at no cost to the student. The SSO will provide students with details if there is a need to refer any matters for further follow up with relevant professionals (e.g. external counseling services). If there are any costs involved with the external services referred, students will be advised of any fees and charges for that particular external service **prior** to the student accessing those services. Students are to inform AHE if they have any financial hardships in paying for these costs and the Registrar will be informed so that AHE can consider, at its discretion, with assisting in paying the costs.

The following support services are available and accessible for all students studying with AHE:

3.2.1 Personal / social issues

Students may access support for issues including when they face any circumstances that may affect their academic or personal life. Any form of sexual harassment or sexual assault or misconduct under any circumstances is unacceptable and is expressly prohibited by AHE at AHE's campus or if caused by or experienced by any AHE stakeholder. Students will be able to access a SSO during AHE's hours of operation to seek support, advice and guidance on personal issues including accommodation, family, social or other personal issues. Where the SSO believes that further support may be required, a referral to an appropriate support service will be organised.

Please refer to **Steps for accessing the SSO and receiving support (Section 3.2 above)** concerning the process to receive support.

3.2.2 Student personal support including external counselling service

The SSO is able to assist in times of stress or pressure during the course. Students may make an appointment to see the SSO or a member of AHE's staff for advice relating to study, such as:

- time management issues;
- setting and achieving academic goals;
- motivation;
- ways of learning;
- managing assessment tasks;
- self-care.

If the need arises to seek additional counselling services, the SSO will have contact details of AHE's external counselling services. AHE has formed an agreement with an external counselling service (The Associated Counsellors and Psychologists Sydney Pty Ltd) where AHE students and staff can receive the first three counselling sessions free of charge.

Please refer to **Steps for accessing the SSO and receiving support (Section 3.2 above)** concerning the process to receive support.

3.2.3 Accommodation (overseas students)

Overseas students are encouraged to have accommodation organised before arriving in Australia. AHE does not offer accommodation services or take any responsibility for accommodation arrangements but can refer students to appropriate accommodation services.

3.2.4 Support for Special Needs

A student is requested to advise the Student Services Officer (SSO) upon enrolment of any disabilities that may affect their learning, including access issues.

The SSO is available to provide advice to students and to consult with the relevant lecturer, as appropriate, regarding any reasonable adjustment for accommodating the student's Special Needs. For each assessment, in the first instance, the student is to consult their unit lecturer as to what they require. The student will be required to fill out the **Request for Support for Special Needs Form** in **Appendix 1**.

Please refer to **Steps for accessing the SSO and receiving support (Section 3.2 above)** concerning the process to receive support.

3.2.5 Students experiencing difficulties with learning at AHE

The following Policies and Procedures can be consulted to determine the most appropriate support for the student:

- AHE Student Academic Progression Policy and Procedure
- AHE Overseas Students Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Policy and Procedure
- AHE Student Academic and Non-Academic Support Policy and Procedure

1. Variation of enrolment [Extension of course duration for overseas student – complete section below]

Where the student requires a reduced study load or an extension of course duration to successfully complete the course. Where there is a reduced study load, consideration must be given to the student's ability to complete the course within the nominated or expected duration.

2. Summer School

To be considered with a variation of enrolment and academic condition for re-enrolment. Summer School offers a limited range of units primarily directed at students remediating units with a Fail grade.

3. Tutorials, peer-support sessions and study groups

Additional tutorials or peer-support session may be provided by AHE where a number of students are experiencing difficulties with a unit, or student may be referred to attend student-directed study groups.

4. Academic skills workshops

Workshops coordinated by the Librarian/Learning Support Officer (LSO) to equip students with academic skills such as time management, communication, planning, and computer skills.

5. Academic literacy and English language support

The Librarian / Learning Support Officer (LSO) will support the development and dissemination of information for support with academic literacy and/or English language proficiency. The Librarian or LSO may provide support in the form of individual or group sessions to develop student study skills, academic or English language skills workshops, tutoring and workbooks.

6. Student consultation with teaching staff

Teaching staff will be available during the Semester for one hour per week for student

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consultation for each unit they are teaching in order to allow students to consult on issues related specifically to those units of study. Additional hours may be allocated where students are required to attend consultation under the SARAS Agreement.

7. Individual case management

For students requiring regular or ongoing check-ins or support, AHE may organise scheduled meetings with a nominated Student Services Officer (SSO), Librarian/Learning Support Officer (LSO), the Course Coordinator or other support staff. This is suitable option for students requiring support for mental health, wellness or other personal issues, or academic support including time management, motivation and ways of learning.

8. Reasonable adjustment for special needs

The Student Services Officer (SSO) is available to provide advice to students and to consult with the relevant lecturer, as appropriate, regarding any reasonable adjustment for accommodating the student's special needs.

9. Referral to external agency to seek support

Student will be provided with references for or sources to access external agencies that may provide specific support services including mentoring, counselling, legal advice, medical care or accommodation assistance.

10. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student support

Additional assistance and support is provided to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through mentorship by a Student Services Officer (SSO) throughout their study with regular face-to-face support meetings. Mentorship with the SSO should be reviewed and consideration of additional sessions, different SSO or supplemented with other academic and non-academic support.

4. Hardship

- 4.1.1 The requirements of study may present some students with hardship due to economic, social or other difficulties. An overseas student who is an applicant under this category must still meet the requirements of the relevant regulations affecting their individual student visas. Guidance and support will be provided by AHE for issues identified for support in accordance with the **AHE Student Academic Progression Procedure**.
- 4.1.2 Where genuine hardship exists, a student may seek permission to review their workload or other related matters. To make an application, a student is required to provide a letter to the SSO describing the reason for their hardship. It is essential to include evidence supporting a claim of hardship, for example:
- 4.1.3 Financial hardship: government benefit statements, pay slips or bank statements which indicate financial status;
- 4.1.4 Medical grounds: medical certificates stating nature of condition, duration;
- 4.1.5 Single parent: evidence by way of statutory declaration and supporting government documentation.

Please refer to **Steps for accessing the SSO and receiving support (Section 3.2 above)** concerning the process to receive support.

5. Student Orientation

All students are expected to attend Orientation at the beginning of their studies with AHE. For overseas students, attendance at the AHE Orientation is compulsory.

AHE's Orientation is organised by the SSO and the Admissions Officer and will include:

- An Orientation Power Point presented Face-to-face by the Admissions Officer.
- The Orientation Power Point will be uploaded in Moodle and the Student Portal so that students can access the information online.
- The Student Orientation Declaration will be handed to students at the end of the Orientation session to complete; once completed, the Admissions Officer is to sign off and follow up as necessary.
- The SSO will then conduct a tour of the AHE campus, library and learning areas, classrooms, student common areas, student administration and student support areas, and any other relevant areas, such as toilets, fire exits, and restricted areas.
- After Orientation, students will receive a copy of the **AHE Student Handbook** which contains information about AHE's policies and procedures, complaints procedures, and how to access student support at AHE.
- Students who do not attend Orientation (e.g. overseas students who are delayed in their arrival to Australia) will be contacted when the study period commences and another Orientation session will be arranged early during the study period.

6. Dissemination and Publication:

This Policy and Procedure will be published in the **AHE website** and accessible to all students through their student portal. Students will also be advised of this Policy and Procedure during Orientation in the **AHE Student Handbook**, and the **AHE Bachelor of Business Course Guide**.

Information concerning the SSO, LSO and AHE's academic and non-academic support services will also be published in Student Noticeboards.

7. Relevant Legislation and Benchmarking Documents

- Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS)
<https://cricos.education.gov.au/>
- Department of Home Affairs <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/>
(Previously Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP))
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000
<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00292>
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017L01182>
- TEQSA National Register <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/national-register/provider/apex-institute-higher-education-pty-ltd>,
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
(Refer to Higher Education Standards Panel) <https://www.dese.gov.au/higher-education-standards-panel-hesp/higher-education-standards-framework>
- Newcastle University Student Support
<https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/support>
- AIH Student Support Framework

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<https://aih.nsw.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/ACAHE10-Student-Support-Framework-2020.1.pdf>

- Disability Standards for Education 2005:
<https://www.dese.gov.au/disability-standards-education-2005>
- TEQSA Guidance Note: Wellbeing and Safety (2018)
<https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/publications/guidance-note-wellbeing-and-safety>
- TEQSA Good Practice Note: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector (2020)
<https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/publications/good-practice-note-preventing-and-responding-sexual-assault-and-sexual>

8. Related Documents

- Bachelor of Business Course Guide
- AHE Student Letter of Offer and Agreement
- AHE Student Handbook
- AHE Student Orientation Power Point
- AHE Website (Please refer to the temporary AHE Website <https://apex-h.pagecloud.com/>)
- AHE Student Admission Policy and Procedure
- AHE English Language Requirements for Admission
- AHE Student Grievance, Complaint and Appeal Procedure
- AHE Staff Employment, Review and Professional Development Procedure
- AHE Overseas Students Fees Payment Policy and Procedure
- AHE Overseas Students Fees Refund Policy and Procedure
- AHE Overseas Students Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Policy and Procedure
- AHE Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure
- AHE Student Code of Conduct
- AHE Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy and Procedure
- AHE Staff Code of Conduct
- AHE Student Academic Progression Policy and Procedure
- AHE SARAS (Student At Risk Academic Support) Agreement and Review
- AHE Workforce Plan and Staffing
- AHE Institutional Quality Assurance Framework

9. Definitions

Refer to the **AHE Table of Acronyms and Definitions**

Version Control and Approval

| Version | Person Responsible and Action Taken | Date | Approved by |
|---------|--|------------|--|
| 2021.2a | CEO/Executive Dean: Added that academic staff may refer students to non-academic staff for support; The Noticeboard will inform students of academic and non-academic support available. | 9 Sep 2021 | CEO/Exec Dean as per 7 Sep 2021 AB meeting |
| 2021.2 | CEO/Executive Dean: Added aspects of Students experiencing difficulties with learning at AHE – this is for consistency with the | 2 Sep 2021 | CEO/Exec Dean as per |

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| | SARAS Form. Added to Section 5 that another O session will be held for students coming in late to AHE | | BOD meeting feedback |
| 2021.1 | CEO/Executive Dean: Policy updated for inclusion of CRICOS code; staff are inducted concerning student support; additional support for indigenous Australians; attendance is taken; contact details of SSO and LSO added; steps given for when students contact the SSO; SSO and LSO hours of access are clarified in accordance with academic plan | 26 August 2021 | Board of Directors |
| 2019.1 | CEO/Executive Dean: Policy updated upon signing of MOU with Associated Counsellors & Psychologists Sydney Pty Ltd. Three sessions updated based on advice of Associated Counsellors & Psychologists Sydney | 6 August 2019 | CEO/Executive Dean |
| 2018.2.2 | CEO/Executive Dean: Reformatted document | 15 Nov 2018 | CEO/Executive Dean |
| 2018.2.1 | CEO/Executive Dean: Corrected typos Externally reviewed by Prof J Edwards 30 October 2018 | 5 October 2018 | CEO/Executive Dean |
| 2018.2 | CEO/ Executive Dean: Amended with document to include Disability Standards for Education 2005 and in the Form. Approved. | 3 Sep 2018 | Academic Board |
| 2018.2 | CEO/ Executive Dean: Amended with change to a policy and procedure; consultation time to be approved by Coordinator; student support in line with ESOS requirements; Support for Special Need Form created and benchmarked; all SSO and support services to be publicised in Student Noticeboard and website and student portal; accommodation services is general advice only. | 30 July 2018 | Academic Board Minutes |
| 2018.1 | CEO/ Executive Dean: Created document | 20 July 2018 | |

Appendix 1: Request for Support for Special Needs Form**Request for Support for Special Needs Form**

This form is to be filled when a student requires support for Special Needs

Guidance Notes (based on **Disability Standards for Education 2005**): AHE has an obligation to make **reasonable adjustments** where necessary to ensure that students with disabilities are able to participate in education and training on the same basis as students without disabilities.

The process includes:

- consultation with the student;
- consideration of whether an adjustment is necessary;
- if an adjustment is necessary, identification of a reasonable adjustment;
- making the reasonable adjustment.

Section 1: Student Details

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|------------|--|
| Name | |
| Student ID | |
| Course | |
| Phone | |
| Email | |

Section 2: Details of Special Needs/ Medical Information:

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Section 3: Please describe how your condition impacts your study at AHE and assistance required:

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Section 4: Documentation of Scanned Medical Information:

Document Name and Details: _____

Document Name and Details: _____

Document Name and Details: _____

Document Name and Details: _____

Section 5: Agreement Details by Student:

I give permission to AHE to collect and store my personal information:

Student Signature: _____

Dated: _____

AHE staff consulted: Name: _____

Signed and Dated: _____

Office Use Only:

Recorded in Student Record by: _____ Date: _____

Recorded in Special Needs Register by: _____ Date: _____

Section 7:

Details of Reasonable Adjustment measures taken and dates implemented: