Mental Health and Wellbeing Response and Management Policy

Document

Document Name	Mental Health and Wellbeing Response and Management Policy
Brief Description	This document describes Sydney Institute of Business and Technology's (SIBT) mental health and wellbeing promotion, prevention and intervention controls and processes, designed to create a work and study environment that will assist staff and students to achieve and maintain optimal mental health and wellbeing in a mentally healthy environment.
Responsibility	College Director and Principal
Delegated Authority	Senior Management Team
Date for Next Review	14 March 2025

Version Control

Date Approved	Version No.	Summary of Changes	Approver
01/10/2019	1	Initial Release	Chief Executive Officer, University Partnerships Australasia
31/01/2020	2	First review	General Manager Quality, Risk and Compliance
9/9/2021	3	Adjusted for SIBT. Navitas references removed. Relevant legislation added. Definitions reviewed and amended.	Senior Management Team
14/03/2024	4	Definitions reviewed and updated. Responsibilities expanded and strengthened. Removal of operational and strategic appendices.	Senior Management Team

Related Documents

Name	Location
Critical Incident Policy	SIBT Website
Discrimination, Harassment, Victimisation, and Bullying Policy	SIBT Website
Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Policy	SIBT Website
Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy	SIBT Website
Student Complaints and Appeals Policy	SIBT Website
Student Complaints and Appeals Resolution Procedure	SIBT Website
Student Wellbeing and Welfare Support Policy	SIBT Website
Support for Student Policy	SIBT Website
Support for Student Procedure	SIBT Website
SIBT Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan	Intranet
Disability Discrimination Act 1992;	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Fair Work Act 2009	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) Act 1986	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Amendment (Employee Involvement and Compliance) Act 2004	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Racial Discrimination Act 1975	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Racial Hatred Act 1995	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Sex Discrimination Act 1984	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Higher Education Support Act 2003	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018	https://www.legislation.gov.au/

Contents

1   Purpose

a)   The purpose of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Response and Management Policy is to create an enduring culture and environment that promotes and supports the health and wellbeing of all who study and work in the SIBT community.

b)   The Policy is designed to maintain a focus on students and staff, in order to create an "inclusive wellness environment" through positive work and study place practices.

a)   This document is compulsory reading for all staff and wherever possible, students.

2   Application

a)   This Policy applies to all staff, inclusive of professional, academic, contractors and casual staff and all students, regardless of study mode.

3   Definitions

a)   Unless the contrary intention is expressed in this Policy, the following words (when used in this policy) have the meaning set out below:

Term	Meaning
Critical incident	Means an event, or series of events, that has a stressful impact sufficient enough to potentially overwhelm the usually effective coping skills of a person or group or interrupts the normal flow of activities of the organisation in a way that impacts psychological health and safety.
Debrief	Means a supportive discussion following a critical incident that allows people to talk through and process their experience and aims to lessen the psychological impact of the event.
Early intervention	Means specialist services and support in the early stages of a potential mental health condition, which focus on assessing and dealing with social, emotional or behavioural issues to improve mental health outcomes by preventing or reducing adverse consequences.
First responders	Means a member of the SIBT staff who, as part of their substantive duties, may provide appropriate support and information to anyone who, under this Policy, may be negatively affecting their mental health and wellbeing.
Mental health	Mental health is a positive concept related to the social and emotional wellbeing of people and communities. The concept relates to the enjoyment of life, ability to cope with stress and sadness, the fulfilment of goals and potential, and a sense of connection to others. Throughout this document the term 'mental health' should be interpreted as a broad concept that includes mental wellbeing, and exists on a continuum from positive, healthy functioning to severe impact on functioning.
Mental health condition	A mental health condition is a clinical condition (such as anxiety, depression or PTSD) diagnosed by a mental health professional that significantly interferes with a person's cognitive, emotional or social abilities (to varying degrees of severity).
Mental health professionals	A term that refers to qualified and registered health and mental health practitioners such as GPs, psychiatrists, psychologists, mental health nurses, mental health occupational therapists, social workers, and counsellors, who are trained in the assessment and management of mental health conditions.
Mentally healthy workplace culture	A workplace with shared assumptions, values, and beliefs, which influences, and is influenced by, how people behave in the organization. The culture

Term	Meaning
	actively minimises risks to mental health, promotes positive mental health and wellbeing, is free of stigma and discrimination, and supports the recovery of workers with mental health conditions, for the benefit of the worker, organisation, and community.
Peer support	Peer support is an avenue of worker support provided by a trained group of fellow workers, as part of a formalised peer support program. The relationship is not intended to be a therapeutic one. It is a contact, support, and referral service with an emphasis on brief, practical interventions.
Psychological first aid	A humane, supportive response to a person who is suffering and may need support. It is not professional counselling or debriefing.
Stress	Means is a response to an event or situation that's challenging our coping mechanisms and affecting how we are thinking and feeling. It may be associated with work, family or personal relationships.
Suicide prevention	An umbrella term for targeted efforts to reduce the incidence of suicide.
Stigma	Stigma marks a person as 'different'. The World Health Organization (2001) defines stigma as "a mark of shame, disgrace or disapproval which results in a person being rejected, discriminated against, and excluded from participating in a number of different areas of society."
Wellbeing	A state of being comfortable, healthy or happy – to feel good and function well. Broader than just mental health, a state of wellbeing is where a person is considered to be flourishing in both mental and physical health.

4 Policy Statement

a) SIBT believes that the mental health and wellbeing of its staff and students is key to our organisational success and sustainability and will encourage staff and students to take responsibility for their own mental health and wellbeing.

b) This Policy has been prepared in accordance with relevant legislative requirements, protocols and principles that prevail in the region that SIBT operates in.

c) The Policy sets out how SIBT complies with relevant legal standards and regulations regarding the management and nurturing of a positive, healthy, and inclusive work and study environment for all staff and students.

4.1 SIBT's Goals

a) To build and maintain a work and study environment and culture that supports mental health and wellbeing and prevents discrimination (including victimisation, bullying and harassment).

b) To increase staff and student knowledge and awareness of mental health and wellbeing issues and behaviours.

c) To reduce the stigma around depression and anxiety in the work and study place.

d) To facilitate staff and students' active participation in a range of initiatives that support mental health and wellbeing.

4.2 SIBT Focus Areas

a) SIBT efforts will focus on staff (inclusive of contractors and casual staff) and students including:

     i.   Promotion through leadership support, policies and procedures and providing the right support at the right time;

     ii.   Prevention by identifying and responding to risks early, developing resilience and building self-management competencies; and

     iii.   Intervention through the provision of services, training, and critical support.

5 Responsibilities

a) The Campus Director and Principal has responsibility for, and is committed to:
   i. The effective implementation of this policy; and
   ii. Promoting a mentally healthy workplace culture without stigma.

b) SIBT's Senior Management Team will:
   i. Support managers to fulfil their health and safety responsibilities and accountabilities within their area of responsibility;
   ii. Provide training for support managers in psychological first aid, suicide prevention, identifying stress and mental health conditions and opportunities for early intervention;
   iii. Formalise and embed support for wellness into SIBT planning, documentation and related processes to ensure a commitment to wellness becomes part of SIBT's fabric;
   iv. Critically examine policies and processes, practices and feedback to eliminate prejudice and inequities in SIBT's approach to mental health and wellbeing;
   v. Continually assess the capacity and capabilities of the mental health professionals providing support and peer support mechanisms.

c) All SIBT employees, students, contractors, and visitors have a responsibility to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and the health and safety of others and comply with any reasonable policy, procedure, or instruction.

d) Navitas' Health and Wellbeing Manager is responsible for strategic coordination and monitoring of health, wellbeing, and safety performance across the Division, which includes SIBT.

e) SIBT Student Learning and Welfare Support Manager is responsible for ensuring and managing mental health support and wellbeing initiatives for students.

f) The SIBT Workplace Health and Safety Committee is responsible for:
   i. Regularly reviewing and updating the SIBT Wellness, Health & Safety (WHS) Action Plan which facilitates the planning, prioritising, and monitoring of wellness, health & safety initiatives that align with the Navitas Wellness, Health & Safety Policy;
   ii. Consulting with employees on the development of the Plan and presenting an updated SIBT Wellness, Health & Safety (WHS) Action Plan to SMT on a quarterly basis;
   iii. Reporting on the outcome of the annual Staff Wellbeing survey to the SMT and implementing any actions identified by SMT as a result of the survey outcomes.

g) SIBT First Responders are responsible for:
   i. Providing support in response to a critical incident or an incident;
   ii. Limiting the number of times and the number of people to whom the complainant must recount the details of the incident;
   iii. Conduct a supportive discussion or debrief following a critical incident that allows people to talk through and process their experience;

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    i. The following staff roles have a responsibility as a first responders:
        - Student Counsellors;
        - Senior staff in Student Support Services;
        - Senior Management.

h) Each of the positions involved in implementing and achieving policy objectives and carrying out procedures to support a successful implementation and adoption are clearly described in the RASCI chart in Appendix 1.

6   Compliance

6.1   General

a) Mental health is not generally classified as an 'occupational disease' in many countries.

b) The risks associated with this area are often considered to be "soft" risks that lack measurement and evidence on exposure and potential consequences.

c) SIBT needs to balance a focus of resources on both physical occupational hazards and psychosocial factors in order to secure compliance.

d) Compliance can be made more complicated as a result of cultural barriers such as the stigma associated with mental health.

e) Operationalising this policy is contingent upon aligning SIBT processes with prevailing legislation and regulation in our region.

6.2   Breaches

a) The consequences of breaching this policy include the appropriate disciplinary action being taken against a person who is found to have breached this policy.

b) SIBT encourages the proactive reporting of potential compliance breaches, issues, incidents and complaints.

c) Staff, students, contractors or other third parties who knowingly and recklessly breach SIBT's compliance obligations may be subject to applicable legislative penalties and/or disciplinary action.

6.3   Relevant Legislation

a) Related Documents provide examples of legislation applicable in the region in which SIBT operates.; The SIBT Quality, Risk and Compliance Managers will ensure that local legislation supports the operationalisation of this policy.

7   Review

a) This Policy is reviewed annually by the position identified under 'Responsibility' and the Quality and Compliance Manager and updates any changes to the regulatory compliance requirements, legislation, regulation, and guidelines.

b) This review process aims to ensure alignment to appropriate strategic direction and continued relevance to SIBT's current and planned operations.

Appendix 1: RASCI Framework

A RASCI is used for clarifying and defining roles and responsibilities and is an acronym derived from the five key responsibilities most typically used: *responsible*, *accountable*, *consulted*, *supporting* and *informed*.

The role distinctions are:

Responsible - Does the work to complete the task.
Accountable - Delegates work and is the last one to review the task before it's deemed complete.
Supporting - Resources which play a supporting role in implementation.
Consulting - Provides input on the task based on how it will impact their area.
Informed - Needs to be kept in the loop on task completion and is not involved in the details of every task.

Responsibility	CDP	SMT	SAs and CNSLRs	1st Resp.	QCM	All
Actively support and contribute to the awareness and implementation of this policy, including its goals	A	R	S	S	C	I
Ensure that all staff receive a copy of or direct access to this policy during the induction process	A	R			C	I
Ensure students receive easy access to this policy during orientation	A	R			S	I
Staff and students are empowered to actively contribute to and provide feedback on this policy and are notified of policy changes	A	R	S	S	C	I
Formalise and embed support for wellness into SIBT planning, documentation and related processes to ensure a commitment to wellness becomes part of SIBT's fabric	A	S	S	S	R	I
Critically examine policies and processes, practices and feedback to eliminate prejudice and inequities in the framework of SIBT's approach to mental health and wellbeing	A	R	S	S	R	I
Maintain and develop healthy spaces throughout the SIBT campus	A	R	S	I	S	I
Highlight supports and resources which are already available	A	R	S	S	S	I
Create learning opportunities on a number of platforms to increase student and staff knowledge and understanding about health and wellness and how to access the appropriate resources in a timely manner.	A	R	S	S	C	I
Align with WSU's health and wellness messages and promote in a coherent manner	A	R	S	S	I	
Proactively provide support and highlight available resources for identified at-risk communities within SIBT	A	S	R	R	S	I

Responsibility	CDP	SMT	SAs and CNSLRs	1st Resp.	QCM	All
Offer programs and services that develop the ability of students and staff to manage health and wellness both independently and with support from others	A	R	S	S	S	I
Develop new orientation programs to provide newcomers with the greatest chance of success in SIBT's campus environment and beyond.	A	R	S	S	C	I
Provide students and staff access to general and critical support services in a timely, accessible and confidential manner	A	S	R	R	C	I
Provide training on how to identify those in crisis and how to respond in a timely and appropriate manner	A	S	R	R	S	I
R = Responsible, A = Accountable, S = Supporting, C = Consulting, I = Informed						
CDP = College Director and Principal, SMT = Senior Management Team, SAs and CNSLRs = Student Advisors and Counsellors, 1st Resp. = First Responders, QCM – Quality and Compliance Manager, All = all staff, students, campus visitors and contractors						

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