

Support for Students Policy

Document

Document Name	Support for Students Policy
Brief Description	This policy outlines the various policies and processes that cover the range of support available to students at Sydney Institute of Business and Technology (SIBT) in accordance with section 238-10 of the <i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i> , and <i>Higher Education Provider Amendment (Support for Students Policy) Guidelines 2023</i> .
Responsible Officer	Director of Student and Academic Services
Delegated Approver	Academic Board
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Version Control

Date Approved	Version No.	Summary of Changes	Approved by:
20/12/2023	1	Initial	Academic Board
28/3/2024	2	Update Policy to align with TEQSA Guidelines	Academic Board
12/12/24	3	Confidentiality and privacy considerations clarified, reference to communication strategies and advocacy strengthened, clarified support mechanisms and categories, clear understandable English replaced some terminology especially in Definitions, Formative and Diagnostic definitions split and clarified, Role titles updated. Increased detail and clarity for Item 7. Communication	Academic Board (Endorsed by: SMT, SCCC and LTC)

Related Documents

Name	Location
Admissions Policy	SIBT Website
Assessment Policy	SIBT Website
Attendance Policy	SIBT Website

Name	Location
Child Protection Policy	SIBT Website
Critical Incident Policy	SIBT Website
Discrimination, Harassment, Victimisation and Bullying Policy	SIBT Website
Equity and Diversity Policy	SIBT Website
International Students Under 18 Policy	SIBT Website
Mental Health and Wellbeing Response and Management Policy	SIBT Website
Privacy Policy	SIBT Website
Program Progress Policy	SIBT Website
Reasonable Adjustment Policy	SIBT Website
Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Policy	SIBT Website
Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy	SIBT Website
Special Consideration Policy	SIBT Website
Student Life Guide and Handbook	SIBT Website and Intranet
Student Wellbeing and Welfare Support Policy	SIBT Website
Privacy Act 1988	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/
Higher Education Provider Amendment (Support for Students Policy) Guidelines 2023	Federal Register of Legislation - Higher Education Provider Amendment (Support for Students Policy) Guidelines 2023



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1. Purpose

- a) SIBT is committed to ensuring its students are provided with the support and resources required to assist them to be successful in their studies.
- b) The Support for Students Policy:
 - i. Is to be read in conjunction with the Related documents identified within this Policy;
 - ii. Outlines how students will be identified as 'at risk' of not successfully completing their unit of study and/or progressing satisfactorily, and the mechanisms available to support them to completion; and
 - iii. Is published in accordance with SIBT's obligations under the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth).

2. Definitions

Term	Meaning
Academic Census Date	The final date students can withdraw from units without academic penalty is the last teaching day in week eight (8).
Academic Success Plan (ASP)	An individual support plan, based on an individual student needs assessment, that specifies SIBT academic and wellbeing support and the commitment and engagement required by the student.
Advocacy Support	Impartial support provided to help a student with a range of problems or issues including but not limited to including clearly expressing themselves or navigating SIBT policies and procedures.
Counsellor	A trained and appropriately registered professional who works with students experiencing a wide range of emotional and psychological problems to help them bring about effective change and/or enhance their wellbeing and to help facilitate academic success.
Crisis	A time of intense difficulty or acute risk (educational or personal or interpersonal or an intersection of these) that endangers a student's ability to successfully complete their unit of study.
Diagnostic Assessments	Types of assessments used before learning commences to identify strengths and weaknesses, prior knowledge and potential problems. It covers a broad range of knowledge and skills and is used to refine future teaching plans. Tools include pre-tests and samples of writing.
Financial Census Date	The final date students can apply for or withdraw from units without incurring a debt is the last campus day in week four (4). The Census date is a minimum of 20% of the way through a unit.
Formative Assessments	Types of Assessment used during the learning process to collect data for monitoring progress on a topic and provide feedback to the student. It also informs teaching and learning strategies to improve student attainment. Tools include quizzes, discussions, written tasks, reflections and self-assessments.
Peer Mentoring	Senior SIBT students who have been trained as mentors to provide guidance to new students over the first few weeks of study to help them adapt to the new learning environment and Australian culture.
Student At Risk	A student whose behaviour and/or circumstances, through predicted and/or observed risk, may make them vulnerable to not achieving satisfactory academic progress.
TEQSA	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

Unit of Study	A component of a course of study with a designated unit code, title and credit point allocation in which students enrol and undertake assessment tasks in order to achieve specified learning outcomes.
Welfare Support	Provision of support, information and advice on emotional, financial, educational, recreational, health, housing and other social welfare matters, and assisting to evaluate and coordinate appropriate support.

3. Application

- a) The Support for Students Policy applies to all SIBT staff and students.

4. Policy Statement

- b) SIBT is committed to ensuring students are aware of the support services available throughout their study and that there are sufficient resources available to meet the needs of the students.
- c) SIBT will communicate with students identified as 'at risk' to ensure they are aware of support services available to assist them in successfully completing their units of study and maintaining satisfactory academic progression.
- d) SIBT students are made aware of the Financial Census Date for their units and the financial impact of continuing past this date. SIBT will endeavour to identify and commence support for students before this date.
- e) SIBT students are made aware of the Academic Census Date for their units and the academic impact of continuing past this date.
- f) SIBT endeavours to identify the support mechanisms required based on needs analysis and provides student access to the agreed support for the duration of the session.

5. Identifying Students at Risk

- a) SIBT identifies students in need of targeted individual literacy, numeracy, and other academic as well as non-academic support using various methods of monitoring and assessment such as:
 - i. Admissions team assessment of entry level skills of applicants during the application process to identify risk factors;
 - ii. Early identification of students considered 'at risk' (from Week 1) by the academic team.
 - Diagnostic and formative assessments designed to assess skill levels in the first few weeks without adding to graded weighting of the unit and assist in identifying literacy in:
 - Academic writing;
 - Numeracy/Maths; and
 - Computer skills.
 - Teachers identify and refer students considered 'at risk' directly to the appropriate support service/s;
 - Teachers identify and record student risk factors in the Student Management System, which is monitored by the Academic Success Team Leader.

- iii. Monitoring of identified subgroups engagement, progression and outcomes, throughout their study includes:
 - Students with credit for prior learning to ensure the student was not disadvantaged by the level of credit granted;
 - Under 18 International students are assigned a coordinator who supports the student and helps them stay on track through regular scheduled meetings;
 - Students excluded from other Providers are automatically assigned to the highest level of monitoring and support;
 - Students with a disability are supported based on their specific needs and reasonable adjustments identified as appropriate.
- iv. Monitoring of engagement and attendance;
- v. Ongoing reporting and tracking of students identified as 'at risk' is managed in the SIBT Student Management System.

6. Access and Availability

- a) SIBT will ensure that individuals or organisations with appropriate expertise are engaged to provide the support required to assist students with overcoming issues that put them at risk of not successfully completing their units of study.
- b) SIBT will ensure the quality of qualified support staff engaged in alignment with the 'students first' culture.
- c) SIBT will ensure that students who report non-academic issues that may put them at risk of not successfully completing their units of study, are immediately connected to the supports referred to in Sections 8, 9 and 10.
- d) SIBT ensures easy access to Student Services and Support through a booking portal that facilitates the booking of individual appointments with Student Learning Advisors, Welfare Support Staff, Counsellors, Academic Skills and Math Study Support, Disability and Accessibility Support, and Careers and Employability Consultations.
- e) SIBT will ensure that all policies and information about SIBT's support services are, publicly available and communicated to each individual student through the Student Portal, Orientation, emails and the Student Voice Committee.
- f) Data for analysis on the use of SIBT's support services is reported to the Senior Management Team on a regular basis and where possible, identifies mitigation, trends, resourcing capacity, continuous improvement, response time to student bookings and whether any additional services are required.

7. Communication

- a) SIBT provides students with a 'Student Life Guide' (hard and soft copy) at Orientation that details support policies, support services and how to access them.
- b) Student Services promotes support services through their booth at Orientation.
- c) SIBT communicates available support to students via email, the Student Portal and Learning Management System prior to critical dates such as census dates, exam periods and when critical events occur e.g., natural disasters.
- d) All communication to students identified with a risk factor includes links to relevant policies, reference to support available and a link to the self-service booking portal.
- e) SIBT will respond to students request for access to support services within 24 hours (1 working day) of the request being made.

- f) SIBT commits to reporting on students identified as 'at risk' with various mechanisms in place to identify, assess and engage the student in support strategies as quickly as possible.
- g) SIBT Case Managers will discuss with the student, the implications of the Financial Census Date and Academic Census Date for the students for each unit of study, as part of the support strategy.
- h) Direct communication to students is sent via the student management system where appropriate. Where communication is strictly confidential, such as counselling, welfare or disability support, it is saved in the appropriate case noting system.
- i) SIBT will ensure its academic and non-academic support mechanisms are trauma informed, culturally appropriate, and include information about SIBT's arrangements for First Nations students, students with a disability and those who have experienced family and domestic violence, harassment, sexual harm, or other traumatic events.
- j)

8. Academic Support

- a) SIBT ensures students have access to support services and are made aware of the support available and how to access the support.
- b) SIBT proactively offers students access to Academic Success strategies referred to in paragraph (c) where a student has already been identified as 'at risk' of not successfully completing their units of study, and the student demonstrates risk factors that include:
 - i. The student has not previously engaged with the support strategies offered;
 - ii. The student has previously failed a unit of study in their program; and
 - iii. The student demonstrates low levels of participation in the unit, such as where student's level of engagement and attendance are below the expectations (or requirements) to successfully complete the unit.
- c) SIBT Academic Success strategies include:
 - i. Enrolment in support units: Skills for Academic Excellence (SAES101), Math for Higher Education (BMTH), Math for Higher Education for Statistics (BMTHSTA), Engineering Math Support Unit (EMSU);
 - ii. Regular one-on-one language or academic skills support with Student Learning Advisor (Academic Support);
 - iii. Regular one-on-one sessions with a dedicated Math Support Learning Advisor;
 - iv. Regular meetings with their relevant Program Convenor or Teacher;
 - v. Additional one-on-one or group classes or workshops with the Teacher;
 - vi. Participation in Academic Skills workshops;
 - vii. Reduced study load for the current study period as recommended by Program Convenor or Academic Director;
 - viii. Prescribed personalised study plan for the current and/or subsequent study periods;
 - ix. Academic reasonable adjustment arrangements for students with verified disabilities or health conditions; and
 - x. English Language and Study Assistance Programs.

9. Non-Academic Support

- a) SIBT provides access to non-academic support, including but not limited to, mental health and well-being support through a booking portal that is easily accessible to students. Information about these services is made available to students on the website and learning portal, on campus, in class and at Orientation.
- b) A thorough Student Orientation that is age appropriate and culturally sensitive covers:
 - i. support services available to assist in the transition into life and study in Australia
 - ii. legal services
 - iii. emergency and health services
 - iv. facilities and resources
 - v. complaints and appeals processes; and
 - vi. information on visa conditions relating to course progress and, if applicable, attendance.
- c) SIBT offers various support mechanisms and options to assist students with successfully completing their units, such as:
 - i. Regular meetings with a Counsellor or Student Learning Advisor as face-to-face or online sessions;
 - ii. Referral to external support services, including health providers and legal services, as required
 - iii. Assignment of a Student Mentor/Buddy;
 - iv. Assistance with settlement in Sydney and transition to study, practical welfare support, wellbeing support, study planning and academic skills support and supplementary support;
 - v. Student Welfare and Advocacy support as needed;
 - vi. Advocacy where a student requires support to navigate processes such as misconduct allegations, or appeals;
 - vii. Advice for accommodation, employment, and financial issues;
 - viii. Help in contacting free legal services and other support agencies;
 - ix. Assistance with navigating external systems, including employment issues, or support to access housing, food, financial or other support services;
 - x. Assistance in understanding policies and procedures, e.g., special consideration applications, the complaints and appeals process or extension requests;
 - xi. Careers and Employability skills development;
 - xii. SIBT's crisis and critical harm support.
 - xiii. SIBT responds to students in a crisis and those who have experienced critical incidents by:
 - Offering a compassionate first response;
 - Ensuring the student feels physically safe and supported;
 - Providing referral to any relevant internal or external support services;
 - Where relevant, the student is informed of the option to report incidents internally or externally, ranging from internal complaints to external police reports;
 - Assuring privacy and confidentiality;
 - Providing a trauma informed approach.
 - xiv. Students are informed of the multiple ways to report an incident through:
 - Orientation;

- The Student Portal and SIBT Website;
- All staff including Counsellors, Learning Advisors, Student Services, administration, or academic staff.

10. Other Support Services/Mechanisms

- a) SIBT provides access to supplementary support services, such as:
 - i. Student Ambassadors who are senior students and able to guide commencing and newer students through routine, basic queries about daily life in Sydney and their studies;
 - ii. Engagement with student groups and campus community.
 - iii. English Conversation Groups;
 - iv. Library Services to assist student with accessing learning resources and access study spaces;
 - v. Peer mentoring support via SIBT Buddy programs;
 - vi. Specialised learning materials and accessible technology.
 - vii. Facilitate careers and industry events on campus for students to gain insight into opportunities within fields related to their course of study.

11. Roles and Responsibilities

- a) The Senior Management Team is responsible for reviewing de-identified 'access to support' data to make sure the quality and quantity of support resources are maintained to ensure appropriate and timely support is available to students at all times.
- b) Academic staff will provide support to students in relation to their units of study by:
 - i. Being available for one-on-one student consultations during consultation hours and facilitate additional one-on-one or group classes or workshop, as required;
 - ii. Identifying students with risk factors as early as possible and refer the student directly to the Student Services and Support team for immediate support from Week 1;
 - iii. Prescribing personalised study plans
 - iv. Following up class absences with students to encourage attendance and offering support to ensure they remain on track in their studies.
- c) The Student Services and Support team is a multi-disciplinary team that provides a range of services to support students through their learning journey, including:
 - i. Providing learning, careers and welfare support, advice, advocacy, and assistance to students in keeping with relevant SIBT policies;
 - ii. Ensuring a student-centred approach that recognises the students' expertise in understanding their own needs and focusing on ensuring enablers are in place for students to succeed academically, such as social, wellbeing, welfare, and academic skills support.
- d) Student Counsellor Team:
 - i. Professional, qualified counsellors who provide students access to free, confidential counselling services. They will assist students with strategies to optimise their studies and also assist with anything that is impacting their progress;
 - ii. Provide support, advice and referrals for financial hardship, health related issues including mental health, disability and accessibility support such as

- reasonable adjustments, Centrelink, online safety, personal safety and family issues, advocacy, accommodation, and SIBT applications, forms and processes;
- iii. Are available to provide tailored support for international students;
 - iv. Consult with referred students to develop an immediate individualised support plan and the strategy for how these supports will be delivered;
 - v. Plan and implement student wellbeing and mental health promotion campaigns and activities.
- e) The Academic Success Team Leader will:
- i. Initiate and coordinate monitoring and support to students with an Academic Success Plan (ASP): an individual support plan based on identified student's needs;
 - ii. Track engagement and report on outcomes for students who engage with an Academic Success Plan (ASP) to enable continuous improvement in learning support.
- f) Student Learning Advisors will provide:
- i. Discuss and implement an Academic Success Plan (ASP) as required
 - ii. Assistance with Maths and IT skills, study and exam strategies and study planning;
 - iii. Assistance with completing applications such as special consideration, reduced study load, break in studies (leave of absence), attendance;
 - iv. Assistance with academic skills including essay and report writing, referencing, exam strategies, study planning. English language support;
 - v. Workshops open to all students to enhance their academic skills.
 - vi. Offer online and on-campus support that aims to provide crucial employability skills and confidence to help students find career success;
- g) The Board of Examiners is responsible for:
- i. Identifying students 'at risk' of academic non-progression at the end of each study period;
 - ii. Determining the strategies that will get the student back on track to completing their qualification and referring them for appropriate support based on identified / reported risk factors
 - iii. Monitoring the progress of subgroups (Under 18, Students with Academic Credit, students excluded by other Providers, Conditional Enrolment, Students with Disability) and ensuring appropriate support is in place;
 - iv. Monitoring the effectiveness of strategies applied in the previous session.
- h) The Academic Board is responsible for:
- i. Monitoring the effectiveness of the support strategies to ensure interventions contributed to facilitating a successful outcome for each student.
 - ii. Reviewing 'access to support' data and analysing potential impacts on entry requirements, unit assessments or learning outcomes.

12. Relevant Legislation and Reference Material

- a) SIBT maintains compliance with legislation relating to student support:

Legislation/ Reference Material	Reference
Higher Education Support Act 2003	Section 19-65 and 238-10
Higher Education Provider Amendment (Support for Students Policy) Guidelines 2023	Support for students' policy requirements: Section 49A (1.a – n) and (2.a – b) Requirements in relation to report given on support for students: Section 49B (1.a - j)

13. Reporting

- a) In accordance with section 238-10 of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*, SIBT will provide a qualitative de-identified annual report for the preceding year, on or before 1 March, to the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA).
- b) SIBT adheres to the Privacy Principles as set out in *Schedule 1 of the Privacy Act 1988*, in respect of student personal information to be obtained for the purposes of section 19-43 of the Act.

14. Review

- a) The Support for Students Policy is reviewed annually by the Responsible Officer and the Quality and Compliance Manager and at the time of any changes to the regulatory compliance requirements, legislation, regulation, and guidelines.