

Student Support Framework



Purpose/objective

The Australasian Academy of Higher Education (AAHE) aims to provide an excellent student experience, both within and outside the classroom. This Framework explains how AAHE supports students outside the classroom to increase their likelihood of remaining engaged and achieving their educational goals.

Scope

This Framework applies to all AAHE students and staff.

Definitions

Terms used in this document are defined in the AAHE Glossary.

Framework

1. Principles

- 1.1 Every staff member is expected to treat students kindly and with compassion, to help them feel part of the AAHE community, and to foster positive interactions between all students and staff.
- 1.2 AAHE will provide student support services and mechanisms that are:
 - appropriate: targeted to meet students' needs throughout their studies and to facilitate their engagement and success
 - inclusive: designed for a diverse range of students, readily accessible and where possible free
 - high quality: monitored regularly with student input to ensure that they continue to be fit for purpose
 - responsive: adjusted quickly where improvements can be made or when new issues arise.
- 1.3 AAHE students should be:
 - well **prepared** for study in Australia
 - warmly **welcomed** when they arrive
 - **supported** to do the best they can
 - **valued** as part of the AAHE community and happy to commend AAHE to others
 - **equipped** when they leave AAHE with the skills and confidence they require for work or further study.
- 1.4 AAHE's support services will be provided to students to assist them achieve expected learning outcomes regardless of the student's place or mode of study, and at no additional cost to the student. Where students are studying online or offshore, all of the relevant services and procedures that follow will be provided in person wherever possible or online where necessary.

2. Prepared

- 2.1 AAHE takes a number of steps to prepare students for study and to minimise potential gaps between students' expectations and experience.
- The Marketing Manager ensures that the information provided to prospective students is current, clear and accurate and assists them to make informed choices. Promotional material describes the features of AAHE courses, inherent requirements, likely time commitment, intended learning outcomes and employment prospects, as well as providing information about life, living costs, accommodation options and part-time work opportunities in Melbourne.
 - Critical information is reinforced in letters of offer and students are encouraged to contact AAHE before they accept an offer to discuss any questions or concerns.
 - Education agents undertake training annually to ensure they have the latest information about AAHE courses and policies, and their advice is monitored to ensure that it is correct.
 - Education agents provide students with information about student visa work restrictions, and the Student Handbook and AAHE website provide links to relevant government websites.
 - The enrolment process requires students to read and acknowledge that they understand what is expected of them in terms of their academic progress, anticipated workload and conduct.

3. Welcomed

- 3.1 AAHE maintains regular contact with students after they accept a place at AAHE, to build their sense of connection to the Academy and to provide support and advice in relation to matters such as preparation for study, health insurance and accommodation services.
- 3.2 On arrival, each student will receive a warm welcome and will be assisted to complete their enrolment and any other necessary administrative tasks. Wherever possible, international students are collected from the airport, taken on a tour of AAHE facilities and the surrounding area, and delivered to their accommodation.
- 3.3 Each student will be allocated a buddy and a social program will be arranged to help students form friendships, build their confidence and overcome potential anxieties.
- 3.4 All students are expected to attend a comprehensive orientation program that provides an overview of:
- safety, emergency and critical incident procedures
 - the AAHE Student Code of Conduct and the meanings of the terms it uses (such as bullying and discrimination)
 - other AAHE policies relevant to students, including the Student Academic Integrity Policy and the Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy
 - internal and external support services and how they can be accessed
 - AAHE feedback mechanisms and internal and external complaint processes
 - opportunities to participate in AAHE's decision-making processes
 - the learning activities (including an introduction to the learning management system and to the principles of academic integrity) that they must complete within the first fortnight.
- 3.5 The orientation program will also cover topics such as the challenges students commonly face and strategies for dealing with them. Students will be reassured that it is not unusual to go through difficult times during their course of study, but that support is available to help guide them through these times.
- 3.6 The Student Handbook summarises the information that is covered during the orientation session and contains contact details and links for legal advice, health and welfare services,

community resources, 24-hour crisis lines, religious services, advocacy and accommodation services and so on. This information is regularly updated and easily accessible on the AAHE website.

4. Supported

4.1 AAHE takes a range of actions to provide a safe and inclusive environment on campus:

- All staff are made aware of their responsibility to provide a learning environment that protects student safety, health and wellbeing.
- The staff induction program discusses equity and diversity, intercultural awareness and student mental health issues.
- All staff and students undertake training regarding sexual violence and how to respond in the event of an incident or report. These processes are also outlined in the Student Handbook.
- The Student Code of Conduct is widely disseminated to reduce the likelihood that a student's poor behaviour will make another student feel excluded or unsafe.
- Work health and safety checks are performed quarterly or when staff or students identify a risk and the action taken is documented and reported in line with AAHE policy.
- There are 24-hour security cameras on campus and trained first aid officers and fire wardens.
- Staff are trained in fire evacuation procedures and fire evacuation plans are posted around campus.
- Safety and critical incident processes are covered in the orientation program and the student handbook and are actively promoted on campus.

4.2 Staff are available to assist students outside scheduled class times as follows:

- The Student Support Officers provide an accessible point of contact for AAHE's students.
- The Student Support Officer – Academic assists students with their learning and academic performance, providing academic counselling and support in relation to academic integrity, referencing, study techniques, time management, report writing, English language skills and so on.
- The Student Support Officer – Non-Academic provides integrated health and wellbeing services – advice and support relating to non-academic issues that may be affecting a student's learning (such as anxiety or financial, housing or relationship difficulties) – including referral to outside agencies where appropriate.
- Students can contact the Student Support Officers directly when they feel they need assistance, or they may be referred by another staff member who is concerned about the student's progress or welfare.
- The IT/LMS Officer supports students in operating the Learning Management System (LMS) and AAHE's digital administrative (including database) software and hardware.
- Teaching staff have regular consultation times that are published in unit outlines.
- All staff are expected to return phone calls and answer email queries within two days.

4.3 Recognising that it can be difficult for students to ask for help or acknowledge that they are having difficulty, AAHE's support services will be actively promoted through posters on campus and via the Student Representative Council and social media.

4.4 The Registrar will ensure all administrative staff are aware of the services available and understand how to deal with enquiries and the Dean will ensure that information about how

students can contact the Student Support Officer is published in the AAHE Learning Management System.

- 4.5 Students who indicate that they wish to withdraw or transfer to another provider will be offered an exit interview to ascertain whether there are issues affecting the student experience that AAHE needs to address.
- 4.6 Student attendance and progress are monitored and students who do not engage or who fail their first assessment task are contacted individually to ensure that they are aware of AAHE's progress requirements and have early access to appropriate support.
- 4.7 A learning plan may be arranged or AAHE may intervene formally by placing a student whose progress is at risk on an Academic Intervention Plan. Any student whose progress does not improve may be excluded and will only be readmitted where they can demonstrate their capacity to complete the course successfully. In this way, a student who is unsuited to their course avoids incurring a very large debt for which they have little to show.
- 4.8 All staff providing, or referring students to, support services will handle students' personal information with sensitivity and will maintain confidentiality in compliance with the AAHE Privacy Policy.
- 4.9 Where AAHE staff are unable to provide the support an individual student needs (such as where ongoing counselling is required for serious personal difficulties), they will refer the student to an appropriate external support service. Referrals are at no additional cost, but the student will be liable for any fees the external service may charge.
- 4.10 The following mechanisms are available to support students in certain circumstances:
 - extensions or deferred assessment
 - special consideration
 - Assessment Adjustment Plans for students with ongoing health conditions or disabilities
 - deferment or suspension of enrolment
 - online classes (taking into account any visa requirements for international students)
 - fee payment plans.
- 4.11 Students who are considering withdrawing from their course are encouraged to discuss their intentions with a AAHE staff member before finalising their decision. AAHE takes a proactive approach to counselling students about their options and how they can be assisted to continue with their studies.

5. Valued

- 5.1 To foster their sense of belonging to the AAHE community, students are invited through AAHE's website, posters on campus and social media or email messages to provide feedback on their experience and the quality of its student services and amenities and to make suggestions for improvement.
- 5.2 Staff are encouraged to respond in a constructive way when students raise concerns or make complaints.
- 5.3 Student feedback is obtained for every unit at the end of each teaching period.
- 5.4 Students are provided with a response to their feedback, so they can see that their views are respected and their contribution to AAHE's continuous improvement is valued.
- 5.5 Student feedback and complaints are regularly reviewed and action is taken to address any issues of concern.
- 5.6 Students can participate in AAHE's decision-making processes through the Student Representative Council (SRC), which comprises the Dean and up to six elected students and meets at least four times a year.
- 5.7 Graduates are also invited to provide feedback on their experience and how their course might be improved and are encouraged to stay connected as AAHE alumni.

6. Equipped

6.1 To equip AAHE's graduates for success in a rapidly changing world:

- AAHE courses are developed and reviewed in consultation with industry as well as academic experts, to ensure that the intended learning outcomes and skills are appropriate for employment or further study.
- Employability skills are infused through AAHE's Graduate Attributes and are embedded in learning activities and assessment tasks, reflecting ways of thinking and working in a professional context.
- Students will use an ePortfolio throughout their curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities to reflect on, collate and share evidence of their achievements.
- AAHE fosters in students a commitment to lifelong learning.
- AAHE students have work integrated learning opportunities as part of their course to enhance their employability.

Related legislation and documents

[Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#)

[National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Higher Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#)

[Australian Qualifications Framework \(AQF\)](#)

Assessment Policy

Academic Progress Policy

Critical Incident Policy

Equity and Diversity Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Staff Code of Conduct

Student Code of Conduct

Student Handbook

Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy

Teaching and Learning Plan

Work Integrated Learning Policy

Document information

Document owner: Academic Board

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1	Academic Board	16/1/21	1/10/23	