

Student Welfare Policy and Procedure HEPP49

PURPOSE	
This policy describes the principles and practices at Southern Cross Education Institute (Higher Education) to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of all students and provide accessible, practical support services to assist their academic and personal success.	
SCOPE	
This policy applies to all students of Southern Cross Education Institute (Higher Education).	
DEFINITIONS	
SCEI-HE	Southern Cross Education Institute (Higher Education)
Welfare	Refers to all matters pertaining to the physical, mental and general well-being of students.
Online Safety	Measures and guidance to protect students from cyber risks, harassment, and unsafe online practices
Advocacy	Support and guidance to help students access appropriate services, resolve disputes, and navigate challenges, including accommodation and legal matters
POLICY	
- SCEI-HE is committed to providing students with appropriate academic and welfare support services, information, advice, and assistance to help them attain academic success and improve their personal well-being whilst undertaking a course at SCEI-HE. - The objectives of student welfare support are to: - Meet the needs of those students who may be disadvantaged or vulnerable to enable them to achieve success in their studies and personal wellbeing; - Provide individualised support to those who require it; - Respond to all incidents involving students and staff; - Develop partnerships between student support services and community services to provide broader support options for students; and - Defend and protect all students against harassment, bullying, victimisation, and racial vilification. - The Student Welfare Officer plays a vital role in responding to the needs of students. The Welfare Officer assists students with issues relating to many varying topics that may include areas relating to: - Disability; - Mental Health; - Critical Incidents including suicide and self-harm; - Drug/Alcohol abuse; - Emotional and physical well-being; - Prevention and health promotion; - Referral to professional legal services; and - Referral to professional financial advisers. - Accommodation and advocacy advice - Student support involves all staff as well as external support professionals, including but not limited to psychologists, mentors, social workers, disability support services, mental health services, legal and financial advisors, and medical support professionals such as nurses and General Practitioners.	
PROCEDURE	
SCEI-HE provides the following student welfare support services:	
Counselling Services - Student Welfare Officers are available to discuss personal, physical, mental, or emotional issues that may arise for students during the course of their studies. - Where the Student Welfare Officer is unable to provide the student with the support necessary, that student will be referred to an external counselling service as appropriate to their needs. - Any costs associated with the use of an external professional will be borne by the student. - SCEI-HE partners with local mental health organisations to provide access to free or low-cost mental health	

support services where possible, including workshops and awareness campaigns to promote mental health proactively.

2. Financial Advice

- 2.1 Students should initially contact the Student Welfare Officer for any financial matters.
- 2.2 Where students have financial concerns during the course of their studies, they will be referred to the Finance Manager.

3. Legal Advice

- 3.1 Students should initially contact the Student Welfare Officer for any support on legal matters.
- 3.2 The Student Welfare Officer will refer students to further sources of legal aid if required.

4. Academic and Progress Support

- 4.1 The Academic Director, Course Coordinators and Student Administration Manager are available to assist students with information and advice in regard to enrolment issues, academic progress or educational outcomes or pathways.
- 4.2 Students seeking academic study skills support should first contact their lecturer or Course Coordinator. If further support is required, academic staff or the Student Welfare Officer will refer them to an internal or external Academic Skills Support Officer.

5. Support for Students with Disabilities

- 5.1 Students should advise SCEI-HE in advance and provide documentation of any disabilities that may affect the student's progress prior to commencement of the course.
- 5.2 Where staff are aware of a disability affecting a student, reasonable adjustments can be made to teaching arrangements, assessment and/or materials and access to assist these students with their learning.
- 5.3 Reasonable adjustments will be documented in a formal Disability Support Plan, developed in consultation with the student, to ensure clarity and consistency in support provision.
- 5.4 SCEI-HE campuses are equipped with accessible facilities, including ramps, lifts, and accessible restrooms, to support students with mobility impairments.

6. Student Safety

- 6.1 SCEI-HE will implement strategies to raise student awareness of personal safety risks and issues and what to do in the event of a personal crisis.
- 6.2 Information will be provided to students on the types of behaviours which are considered unacceptable and what to do if they experience such events.
- 6.3 SCEI-HE has monitored video security cameras throughout the campus. The video footage can be accessed upon request to the IT Manager in the event of theft, damage, destruction, unacceptable behaviour, or emergencies.
- 6.4 Where incidents are reportable to law enforcement, a copy of video footage of the relevant incident will be provided to relevant law enforcement agencies e.g., police.
- 6.5 SCEI-HE has policy and procedure in place to ensure the health and safety of students, including to monitor and addressing any reported or identified hazards, managing critical incidents and emergency situations.
- 6.6 SCEI-HE maintains a 24/7 emergency contact line for critical incidents, accessible to all students, including international students, with details provided during orientation.
- 6.7 SCEI-HE implements specific policies and training to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and assault, ensuring a safe and respectful environment for all students.
- 6.8 Students are advised on unacceptable behaviours and reporting procedures, including cyberbullying, phishing, and unsafe online conduct.

7. Accommodation and Advocacy Advice

- 7.1 Students may seek guidance from the Student Welfare Officer on:
 - Finding safe and appropriate accommodation
 - Financial or tenancy matters
 - Accessing advocacy services for disputes, complaints, or personal issues. Referral pathways to internal and external services are provided as needed.

8. Student Misconduct

Students reported of academic or general misconduct will be dealt with according to the *Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure HEPP02*, *Student Code of Conduct HEPP07*, and *Student Misconduct Policy and Procedure HEPP47*, among others.

9. Cultural Awareness

- 9.1 All staff have access to information and/or training on cultural awareness to build a sensitivity for the issues

related to a multicultural environment.

9.2 International students will also receive some information to help assist them to deal with the cultural challenges associated with living and studying in a new country.

9.3 SCEI-HE provides targeted support for diverse equity groups, including Indigenous students, students from low socio-economic backgrounds, and first-in-family students, through initiatives such as mentoring programs and scholarships.

10. Information to Students

Information to students on welfare and support services provided by SCEI-HE will be communicated via the:

10.1 SCEI-HE Website;

10.2 Student Handbook;

10.3 Orientation Program; or

10.4 Business Development Managers.

10.5 Students are informed about the *Student Complaint and Grievance Policy and Procedure HEPP03* during welfare consultations and orientation to ensure awareness of processes for addressing concerns.

11. Student Welfare Policy

11.1 Student Welfare Officers will also contribute to ongoing monitoring of student mental health and coping strategies through wellbeing check-ins, anonymous surveys, and feedback mechanisms. Findings will be de-identified and reported for oversight and continuous improvement. See Mental Health Policy and Procedure (HEPP69).

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure HEPP02

Emergency Response Procedure Manual HEMIS10

Incident and Injury Register

Occupational Health and Safety Policy HEPP26

Privacy Policy HEPP34

Student Code of Conduct HEPP07

Student Complaint and Grievance Policy and Procedure HEPP03

Student Misconduct Policy and Procedure HEPP47

Sexual Assault and Harassment Policy and Procedure HEPP60

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000

National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, Standard 6 (Specifically 6.5)

RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Welfare Officer: Responsible for providing welfare support services to students self-referring or referred.

DOCUMENT AND RECORD CONTROL

Created	Feb 2016 (V1.0)
Amended	V2.0; Feb 2019 (V2.1); May 2020 (V2.2); Feb 2022 (V2.3); Jan 2024 (V2.4); Sep. 2025 (V2.5)
Last reviewed by	Quality Assurance and Compliance Unit (Sep. 2025)
Last approved by	Academic Board (Sep. 2025)
Version	2.5
Effective date	Sep. 2025
Next planned review	Sep. 2025