



## SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

### Introduction

The Australian Academy of Commerce (AAC) is committed to providing inclusive, equitable and supportive services to all students. This policy outlines AAC's commitment to supporting students with mental health needs, disabilities or special circumstances by providing reasonable adjustments and tailored assistance to enable equitable access to education and training. The policy aligns with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 and the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000, National Code 2018 and English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) Standards 2018.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote an inclusive learning environment that supports students with mental health challenges, disabilities and special needs.
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation, including the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.
- Provide clear processes for identifying and meeting students individual support needs.
- Foster student success by offering tailored adjustments and resources.

### Scope

This policy applies to all AAC students, domestic and international, enrolled in ELICOS or VET programs, and to AAC staff responsible for implementing and managing student support services.

### Policy Statement

AAC recognises the diversity of its student body and is committed to providing equitable access to education. Students with mental health, disabilities or special needs have the right to:

- Learn in an environment free from discrimination or barriers.
- Access reasonable adjustments and support services.
- Receive fair treatment, respect and confidentiality.

AAC ensures that:

- Support services are available for mental health, special needs and disabilities.
- Reasonable adjustments are made in training and assessments.
- Clear processes exist for accessing support services.

### Definitions

<b>ELICOS</b>	English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students
<b>Disability</b>	A condition that substantially impacts a person's ability to participate in training and education.
<b>Individual Support Plan (ISP)</b>	A personalised plan that outlines the specific support, services, and strategies required to meet an individual's unique needs, goals, and preferences.



<b>Language Literacy and Numeracy (LLN)</b>	Refers to the core skills essential for individuals to effectively participate in training and the workforce. LLN assessments evaluate a student's ability to meet the skill requirements of their course and identify if additional support is needed.
<b>Mental Health Support</b>	Assistance provided to student's experience mental health challenges.
<b>Reasonable Adjustment</b>	Modifications or accommodations made to the learning environment, training materials, assessment methods or delivery modes to enable equitable access for students with disabilities, mental health needs, or other special circumstances. These adjustments ensure that a students can demonstrate their competencies without fundamentally altering the learning outcomes or imposing unjustifiable hardship on AAC.
<b>Special Needs</b>	Additional requirements or support that a student may need to ensure equitable participation in education, such as assistive technologies, alternative formats for materials, or modified class schedules.

## References

- Disability Discrimination Act 1984
- ESOS Act 2000
- ELICOS Standards 2018: Specifically, Standard P6.9
- ESOS National Code 2018: Specifically, Standard 6
- NVR Act 2011
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Standards for RTOs 2015: Specifically, Standard 1.7

## Related AAC Policies and Procedures

- Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure
- Access, Equity and Mutual Obligation Policy and Procedure
- Attendance Policy (VET and ELICOS)
- Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedure
- Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Course Completion and Qualification Issuance Policy and Procedure
- Course Progression and Intervention Policy and Procedure
- Critical Incident Policy and Procedure
- Orientation and Transition Support Policy and Procedure
- Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure
- Student Code of Conduct
- Student Enrolment and Admissions Policy and Procedure
- Student Handbook
- Student Records Management Policy and Procedure
- Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) Policy and Procedure



## Support for Students Procedure

### 1. Identification of Student Needs

#### 1.1 Enrolment and Disclosure

During the enrolment process, students are encouraged to disclose any disabilities, special needs or mental health concerns confidentially.

Application forms include a section for students to indicate their support requirements, including academic challenges, disability or special needs.

All disclosures are treated confidentially and stored securely in accordance with AAC's *Student Records Management Policy and Procedure*.

#### 1.2 Orientation

Students are informed about available support services during orientation, including access to academic support services, counselling and mental health resources, how to access reasonable adjustments and who to contact for support.

International students are provided with tailored sessions covering information of accommodation, public transport, and local services such as healthcare.

#### 1.3 Initial Needs Assessment

AAC's Student Services Officer (SSO) will meet with students to conduct detailed needs assessments. This may include:

- Reviewing medical documentation or specialist reports (if applicable).
- Discussing the student's specific challenges and how they impact learning.
- Identifying adjustments required in the learning environment, assessments or course delivery.

For students requiring academic support, an LLN assessment may be conducted to determine their readiness for the courses and identify areas for improvement.

### 2. Development and Implementation of Reasonable Adjustments

#### 2.1 Development of an Individual Support Plan (ISP)

Based on the needs assessment, the SSO collaborates with students, teachers, trainers and assessors, to create an Individual Support Plan (ISP).

The ISP may include:

- The nature of adjustment(s) (e.g. extra time for assessments, assistive technology, alternative formats of learning materials, adjusting physical classrooms or facilities).
- How the adjustment will be implemented and monitored.
- Specific roles and responsibilities of staff involved.

#### 2.2 Approval of Adjustments

Adjustments are reviewed by the Director of Studies to ensure they are reasonable, align with course outcomes, and do not impose undue hardship on AAC.

The student is informed of the approved adjustments, and written consent is obtained to implement the ISP.



### **2.3 Implementation of Individual Support Plan (ISP)**

Adjustments are communicated to the relevant teachers, trainers and assessors, and administrative staff.

ISPs are reviewed at the end of each study period or earlier if request by the student or staff. Adjustment may be modified based on the student's progress or changing needs.

## **3. Academic Support Services**

### **3.1 Provision of Academic Skills Development**

One on one support sessions are available to assist students with specific subjects or skills. AAC will also schedule workshops to cover essential academic skills, including:

- Time management and study strategies
- Writing skills, such as essay structure and referencing
- Academic integrity
- Research skills, including using online resources and databases.

For students from non-English speaking backgrounds, AAC provides targeted ELICOS programs focusing on reading, writing, comprehension and oral communication. These can be packaged at enrolment to ensure students are equipped with the necessary language skills before commencing their main course of study.

## **4. Mental Health and Well-being Support**

### **4.1 Access to Counselling Services**

AAC provides confidential, in-house counselling services for students facing mental health challenges as part of a shared service agreement with the Kings Own Institute (KOI). Students requiring long-term specialised support are referred to external mental health professionals or services.

AAC ensures that international students have access to emergency contact numbers for health and legal support, including 24/7 services such as Lifeline or international student helplines.

### **4.2 Crisis Intervention**

In emergencies, AAC follows a crisis interventions protocol, including immediate referral to emergency mental health services or contacting emergency responders.

The Student Services Officer (SSO) ensures follow-up support, including liaising with external services and providing academic adjustments as needed.

## **5. Ongoing Monitoring and Review**

### **5.1 Regular Check-Ins**

The SSO schedules regular check-ins with students receiving adjustments or mental health support to ensure the effectiveness of interventions and adjustments.

Teachers, Trainers and Assessors provide feedback on the student's progress and any additional support needs.

## 5.2 Feedback Mechanisms

Students are encouraged to provide feedback on the effectiveness of adjustments and support services through surveys or one-on-one meetings. Feedback is used to improve AAC's support services continuously.

## 6. Reporting and Documentation

### 6.1 Documentation of Adjustments

All records related to support services, Individual Learning Plans and reasonable adjustments are maintained securely as per AAC's *Student Records Management Policy and Procedure*.

### 6.2 Incident Reporting

Any incidents affecting the student's ability to participate in their studies (e.g. emergencies) are documented and addressed in line with AAC's *Critical Incident Policy and Procedure*.

### 6.3 Compliance with Privacy Laws

AAC ensure compliance with privacy legislation, including the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*, to protect the confidentiality of student's personal and medical information.

### 6.4 Reporting to Regulators

AAC ensures compliance with reporting obligations for international students under the *ESOS Act 200 and National Code 2018*.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibility
CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide strategic leadership to ensure the effective implementation of the Support for Students Policy. Oversee compliance with relevant legislative and regulatory requirements. Promote a culture of inclusivity, equity, respect and support across AAC.</li> </ul>
Compliance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor and review the Support for Students Policy and Procedures to ensure ongoing compliance with updated legislation and regulatory requirements.</li> <li>Identify gaps and recommend updates to maintain alignment with best practices.</li> <li>Ensure staff are aware of and adhere to compliance obligations related to student support.</li> </ul>
Director of Studies ELICOS / Director of Studies VET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oversee the implementation of student support services within academic programs.</li> <li>Ensure reasonable adjustments are integrated into course delivery and assessment.</li> <li>Provide guidance on supporting diverse student needs</li> <li>Monitor the academic progress of students and intervene where necessary.</li> </ul>
Student Services Officer (SSO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Act as the primary contact for students seeking support services.</li> <li>Conduct needs assessment and develop Individual Support Plans (ISP)</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Facilitate access to academic, mental health and well-being support services.</li><li>• Coordinate and communicate reasonable adjustments with relevant staff.</li><li>• Monitor student progress and ongoing support as needed.</li></ul>
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Actively engage with support services and communicate any specific needs to AAC staff.</li><li>• Follow academic and support plans to achieve learning goals.</li><li>• Provide feedback on the effectiveness of support services to help improve processes.</li><li>• Comply with AAC policies and actively participate in their academic and personal development.</li></ul>

## Monitoring and Review

AAC reviews the Support for Students policy and processes annually to ensure they effectively support students, remain aligned with current legislative and regulatory requirements, and responsiveness to the diverse needs of all students.

## Version Control

Version	Date	Description	Approved by	Approval date	Author	Review date
V1.0	11 Feb 2025	Re-developed from AAC welfare and student support V2017.10	CEO	17 Feb 2025	Compliance Team	Feb 2026

## Policy and Document Information

<b>Author:</b>	Compliance Team
<b>Policy owner:</b>	Compliance Officer
<b>Approved by:</b>	CEO
<b>Approved date:</b>	17 February 2025
<b>Status:</b>	Approved
<b>Next review due:</b>	February 2026