

## **Student Learning Support Policy and Procedure**

### **1. Policy Statement and Purpose**

Study Group Australia (SGA) seeks to provide a supportive teaching and learning environment that is responsive to individual student needs. The academic and English language entry levels for each course are regularly monitored, benchmarked and adjusted where necessary, to ensure that students entering SGA programs have the academic and English language proficiencies which will give them a realistic chance to successfully complete their chosen course.

At the same time SGA recognises that, for a wide variety of reasons, students may not achieve the academic results of which they are capable. This document outlines the academic support available to all students.

### **2. Scope**

This policy and procedure applies to students in High School, Foundation<sup>i</sup>, ELICOS or Higher Education courses delivered and awarded by a SGA College listed in the footer of this document.

It is intended to provide information regarding the facilities and resources that are available to students to support them with the academic and English language demands of their courses. The policy also outlines the expectations and responsibilities of staff to identify students with learning support needs and to direct them to or provide them with appropriate resources. Students deemed academically 'at risk' are defined and the support strategies in place for these students described.

This policy and procedure should be read in conjunction with SGA Student Progression Exclusion and Graduation Policy and Procedure, Disability Policy and Procedure, Provision of Support for Students with Disabilities Policy and Procedure, Safety and Wellbeing of Under-18 Students Policy and Procedure, Student Support Policy, and for ELICOS and Foundation courses SGA's Monitoring Student Attendance Policy and Procedure.

### **3. Orientation and Transition to Studies**

All on campus students are required to attend the Orientation Program prior to commencement of classes. The Academic Director / Dean (or equivalent most senior academic or their delegate) is responsible for the delivery of the Orientation program to all students. The Orientation program encompasses a range of educational, course planning, independent living and social information sessions. These include (but are not limited to):

- Registration, ID and campus tour
- Living and studying in Australia
- Learning Management System and IT systems introduction
- Course planning
- Individual course advice and enrolment check
- Academic expectations including plagiarism
- Student Support Services and student Health and Safety information

Orientation sessions are supported through appropriate resources posted on the website and the Student Learning Management System (Study Smart).

The Student Services Manager (or delegate) responsible for checking student attendance at Orientation and following up with students who do not attend or who arrive late. The Orientation and follow up procedures are designed to ensure that all students are appropriately inducted into their course.

#### **4. Identification of Individual Student Needs**

Close scrutiny of students is maintained by lecturers and student services staff. Attendance rolls are taken at each class and assignment submissions are monitored. Students who fail to attend class regularly and/or who fail to submit one or more assessments are contacted by the Academic Director/Dean. The Academic Director/Dean may identify these students as having learning support needs. The Academic Director/Dean will consult with each student identified as having learning support needs.

Learning support needs of students may arise from issues associated with:

- English language
- literacy
- numeracy
- study techniques
- time management
- organisational skills
- working with others
- information technology
- the requirements of the course.

Learner support needs may be identified:

- by poor attendance or poor assessment outcomes
- during initial discussions with academic staff during Orientation
- by self-referral by a student
- when a lecturer/tutor has identified that a learner is experiencing difficulty (this may be by observation in class or upon analysis of assessment items submitted early in the term)
- when a learner seeks assistance from the Student Services Manager, Student Welfare Officer, Academic Director/ Dean or some other member of staff
- after a student subject evaluation survey
- during an interview with a student
- as part of an intervention strategy agreed between the learner and the Academic Director<sup>1</sup>.

#### **5. Ongoing Student Learning Support**

Programs commence during Orientation to assist students with the transition to a tertiary level study regime. The programs include workshops, individual interviews with students and informal support provided by lecturers/tutors. The support programs utilise a wide range of resources available on StudySmart and in the library. Individual assistance is available from specialist support staff.

#### **6. English Language and Academic Assistance**

English language and academic advice workshops and resources include such topics as essay writing, report writing, APA referencing, avoiding plagiarism, using Turnitin, making oral presentations, and examination tips.

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<sup>1</sup> **Academic Director** means the lead senior academic staff member for the College (or their delegate). May also be referred to as Director Academic Programs, Dean, Program(s) Manager or College program lead

## **7. Library**

Library information sessions are held during Orientation. Additional workshops are scheduled throughout the year to assist students to most effectively utilise the range of library resources, including the available electronic databases. These workshops are designed to improve information literacy skills of students. Library staff are available throughout library opening hours to give individual assistance and advice to students.

## **8. Information Technology**

Information technology staff are available on each campus and to help students with the technology available to them and with connectivity issues related to their course.

## **9. Academic Advisor**

Academic Advisors/ Study Support Officers provide regular workshops, covering topics such as time management, exam preparation, essay and report writing, referencing, avoiding plagiarism, library research, and stress management. Other topics are covered as required, with the objective of helping students to improve their performance.

Academic Advisors/ Study Support Officers are, additionally, available for individual counselling with students by referral from staff or self-referral by students. Appointments can be made in person, by email or at the campus reception desk. Times available for appointments are advertised and sent in electronic form to each student.

## **10 Documentation of students seeking support**

Records are maintained by the Academic Director/ Dean of students referred for additional academic or English language support. Academic Advisors/ Study Support officers also keep records of students seeking assistance. Summary data form part of the educational metrics reported to the relevant academic committee (e.g. Teaching and Learning Committee for higher education courses).

## **11. Academic Staff Consultation**

### **In-class consultation**

Individual student consultations with the subject lecturer, tutor or other appropriate academic are an integral part of the learning experience for each subject. SGA's normal weekly teaching pattern provides face to face lectures and a structured tutorial. Further diagnostic tutorials are scheduled to allow students the opportunity to clarify points of confusion, discuss aspects of the subject in more detail and obtain feedback on their assignments, both in draft form and on completed work.

The scheduled times of lectures and tutorials are prominently displayed on notice boards at the campus, online (by use of Study Smart) and provided individually to students. If a lecturer/tutor considers that additional times for consultation are required, at particular times of the trimester, then these may be arranged with the approval of the Academic Director/ Dean or Course Coordinator.

### **Electronic consultation**

Each subject is enhanced by an individual web based support site through Study Smart. The subject web page provides students with access to subject resources and also includes a 'chat room', 'forum' and group email facilities that allow for the posing of questions by students and lecturers and response by both students and lecturers. Such community based facilities are moderated and controlled by the subject lecturer.

All students enrolled in a subject have access to the subject web page. The Academic Director/Dean is responsible for checking following Orientation to ensure that all students have utilised Study Smart.

All students and lecturers have unique SGA email addresses which are the primary conduit for academic and administrative information and enquiries. Students are encouraged to contact lecturers directly by email if they have any questions that will not wait until the next tutorial session. SGA lecturers are required to read and respond to their emails in a timely fashion.

### **Online facilitators**

Facilitators of subjects delivered online provide students with information on the support they provide in their welcome email. Students are required to respond to the welcome email to confirm they have received it. Students are contacted in the first week to ensure they understand the course and assessment requirements and clarify any concerns or questions they may have. Facilitators contact students on a weekly basis and also use the Discussion Forum for regular contact.

Online students also have Skype access to any of the online support staff regarding their studies. These include dedicated online Education Coordinators who provide support to students who have queries or problems.

### **Consultation with Course Coordinator (or delegate)**

Course Coordinators (or delegates) are available for individual consultations at times when they are not engaged in teaching or associated administrative duties. Course Coordinators are normally full time permanent staff and are generally on campus at least from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. Appointments can be made in person, by email or at the reception desk. Times available for appointments are advertised and sent electronically to both on campus and online students.

Course Coordinators provide a range of academic and course management advice, from course planning and subject enrolments, to dealing with appeals and progression issues.

## **12. Students at risk**

### **Definition**

Students are required to attain minimum academic standards. The Academic Director/Dean or Course Coordinator monitors the academic performance of students against the minimum academic standards at the end of each term.

Students do not meet minimum academic standards in a course if they:

- fail a particular unit of study more than once; or
- fail 50% or more of the units of study attempted in a term.

Students who do not meet the minimum academic standards are deemed to be “at risk”. The Academic Director/Dean or Course Coordinator will arrange for academic counselling for all students who are deemed to be “at risk” and also advise such students of the possibility that conditions may be placed on their enrolment. Students identified “at risk” should ensure they have read SGA’s Student Progression Exclusion and Graduation Policy and Procedure.

### **Intervention strategies**

During the academic counselling session, the counsellor and the student will determine what additional support will be provided to the student. This may include, but is not limited to, the student:

- attending academic skills programmes;
- attending tutorial or study groups;
- attending at least 80% of scheduled classes in specified units of study;

- receiving individual case management;
- attending counselling;
- receiving assistance with personal issues which are influencing progress;
- receiving mentoring; or
- a combination of the above and a reduction in course load.

### **Intervention contracts/documentation**

Students deemed at risk are required to complete and sign an Intervention Contract that stipulates the steps agreed with the counsellor to give them the appropriate level of academic support.

The Academic Director/Dean/Program manager/coordinator (or delegate) is required to records the details of any student deemed 'at risk' and placed on an intervention contract. Summary data of students on intervention contracts form part of the educational metrics reported to the relevant academic committee (e.g. Teaching and Learning Committee for higher education courses).

## **13. Policy Review**

This policy is reviewed at a minimum of once every 5 years by the policy owner (or delegate) to ensure alignment to appropriate strategic direction and its continued relevance to current and planned operations. The next scheduled review of this document is listed in the document history section of this document.

## **14 Records**

Records of individual student's results in examinations and assessed coursework are retained by SGA and provided to the student. All credentials issued by SGA and retained assessment records are kept according to statutory requirements, including assessment results and appeal records, consistent with SGA's Records Management Policy. Confidential documents related to the implementation of the policy will be maintained according to relevant privacy requirements.

## **15. Related Documentation**

SGA Student Privacy Policy, SGA Records Management Policy, SGA Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure, SGA Student Progression Exclusion and Graduation Policy and Procedure, Disability Policy and Procedure, Safety and Wellbeing of Under-18 Students Policy and Procedure, Student Support Policy, and for ELICOS and Foundation courses SGA's Monitoring Student Attendance Policy and Procedures. Policies and forms can be accessed from the College's website.

## **16. Related Regulations**

This policy has been developed in line with requirements set out in the: Education Services for Overseas (ESOS) Act 2000 (and its amendments); National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (the National Code) which complements existing national quality assurance frameworks in education and training including the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards, the English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) Standards 2018, the Foundation Standards (operating adjunct to the National Code), the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), the NSW Education Act and related regulations for NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) registered High Schools, and other Commonwealth and State legislation and regulatory frameworks and standards including the Privacy Act 1988.

## Document Approval

|                        |   |                        |                   |
|------------------------|---|------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Document ID</b>     | SGA Student Learning Support Policy and Procedure   |                        |                   |
| <b>Policy Owner(s)</b> | Principal, TCS; College Director, TCP; Centre Director, FISC; Academic Director, ANUC;<br>Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance |                        |                   |
| <b>Approved by</b>     | Academic Board (West)   | <b>Date Approved</b>   | 3 September 2018  |
|                        | Head of International Study Centres<br>– ANZ  | <b>Date Approved</b>   | 3 September 2018  |
|                        |   | <b>Date Commencing</b> | 15 September 2018 |

## Document History

| <b>Commencing Date</b> | <b>Summary of Changes</b>   | <b>Next Review Date</b> |
|------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| 7 December 2012        | v1.0 Initial approval by Academic Board                                 | December 2017           |
| 15 September 2018      | v2.0 Review and amendment to maintain regulatory and business currency. | September 2023          |
| 18 September 2018      | v2.1 Administrative typographical amendments to scope                   | September 2023          |

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<sup>i</sup> References to Foundation courses herein apply only to Foundation courses delivered and awarded by SGA's Taylors College (Perth campus) and Flinders International Student Centre (CRICOS Provider Code 01682E). They do not apply to the University of Sydney Foundation Program (CRICOS Course Code: 022310D) delivered by SGA's Taylors College (Sydney campus) on behalf of the University of Sydney (CRICOS Provider code 00026A).