



Student Learning Support Policy and Procedures

1. Preamble

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 of Policy

This policy is intended to provide staff and students with 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.

3. Orientation and Transition to Higher Education

All on campus students are required to attend the Orientation Program prior to commencement of classes. The Academic Director / Dean 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:

- Registration, ID and campus tour
- Living and studying in Australia
- Library orientation
- Learning Management System and IT systems introduction
- Course planning
- Individual course advice and enrolment check
- Academic expectations including plagiarism
- Student Support Services 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 delegated member of staff is 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
- I.T.
- 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/ Dean

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 Teaching and Learning Committee.

6. 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

Course Coordinators 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.

7. 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.

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 or Course Coordinator is required to record 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 Teaching and Learning Committee

8. Related Documentation

Provision of Support for Students with Disabilities

This policy explains the additional support provided to students with a defined disability.

Student Progression, Exclusion and Graduation Policy and Procedure

This policy deals with the subsequent steps to be taken for students who continue to fail to meet minimum academic standards.

Version Control

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