

Student Support Policy

Version 2.0

1. Purpose

This policy sets out the processes deployed by Nexus Institute of Higher Education

- to assess the needs and preparedness of individual students and cohorts and support their transition to higher education
- to assess students' suitability to continue to undertake a subject,
- to identify and support students identified as at risk of not successfully completing subjects, and
- to provide access to support services to students and proactively offer support to students at risk,

as required by the Higher Education Provider Amendment (Support for Students policy) Guidelines 2023.

The policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Admissions Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy
- Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- Equity and Diversity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Progress and Intervention Policy
- Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy
- Student Code of Conduct

2. Scope

The policy applies to all students at Nexus Institute and all staff involved in supporting students to succeed in their studies.

3. Definitions

Nil.

4. Policy statement

Nexus Institute is committed to the success of its students. Nexus Institute seeks to proactively identify the needs of students and cohorts of students for academic and non-academic support and guide them to suitable customised services.

Nexus Institute has a range of policies and services to support students. Support is available for students at risk of failing to maintain satisfactory academic progress and for students who require additional non-academic support for mental health and wellbeing.

Nexus Institute provides a formal orientation program to support transition and identify student needs. Orientation for new students is held in the week immediately before the

beginning of each study period. Attendance at Orientation is compulsory and provides new students with information and advice on how to make the most of their studies at Nexus Institute. Orientation provides students with information on study skills, emergency, health and legal services, on-campus student support services and counselling services. Orientation also provides an introduction to Nexus Institute facilities and policies including, expectations for classroom and online conduct, attendance and academic progress.

Orientation for international students also emphasises the student's responsibility for complying with the conditions of their student visa. While post-study pathways to permanent migration are available, only a limited number of graduates will be eligible and those who are unable to remain lawfully in Australia must depart Australia.

Academic advising is available to students throughout teaching periods including the exam weeks. All teachers have an obligation under the conditions of their appointment to schedule one hour a week outside class time when they are available for regular and timely engagement with students to answer questions and provide academic advice. Students may also contact academic staff online outside scheduled consultation times. Subject coordinators have a particular responsibility to monitor the engagement of students in their subject, identify where extra support may be required and refer students to support services. Advice on course progress is also available by appointment from the Course Director and the Executive Dean.

Student support services provide a comprehensive service to students. Specialised support services include learning skills programs, English language development classes, numeracy support, counselling and career advice. Topics covered in the study skills program include time management, exam techniques, presentation techniques, research skills and referencing and academic misconduct. These services include support to students identified as being at risk of not meeting satisfactory course progression requirements. The services are provided free of charge to enrolled students.

Academic staff, student services staff and counsellors may refer students to learning skills programs and support services at any time during the trimester.

Professionally qualified counsellors provide a confidential service to assist students manage difficulties as they arise. The counsellors assist students with support in addressing a wide range of personal, academic, social and psychological issues that may impact on their wellbeing. Counsellors may refer students to external agencies for specialised support.

5. Procedures

These procedures identify the policies and support services to address the legislative requirements.

- (a) *Processes to assess a student's suitability to continue to undertake a unit of study, in particular in relation to students that are at risk of not successfully completing their units of study.*

The Progress and Intervention Policy explains how Nexus Institute identifies students who are not making satisfactory academic progress and provides timely support to assist them in their studies. Students at risk are identified early through their record of previous studies, their attendance and engagement with learning resources in their studies and their submission and performance on assessment tasks. Admissions staff identify new students potentially at risk from

their record of previous studies (for example, frequent changes of provider, frequent poor grades, concerns about attendance). Academic staff check students' engagement from the start of teaching and report students who have a poor record of attendance or do not make genuine attempts on early assessment tasks. Logs from the Learning Management System are used to check that students are accessing learning resources. Student engagement and progress is monitored during and at the end of each study period and specific advice and support is provided under the intervention strategy.

(b) *Processes to ensure that additional support is available to assist students at risk in overcoming the issues that put them at risk of not successfully completing their units of study.*

The Progress and Intervention Policy explains how Nexus Institute takes account of individual student needs and designs a support program to address study skills or other barriers to success through academic advising, counselling and support. The intervention strategy is monitored through a learning contract and regular meetings between the student and their adviser.

Nexus Institute monitors course progression and identifies any students and cohorts of students at risk of not maintaining satisfactory progress at admission, during the study period and at the end of the study period. Progress is monitored and processes to identify and support students-at-risk are implemented by the Board of Examiners, Student Services, academic staff and Counsellors.

The Academic Risk Monitoring System (ARMS) is a three-step intervention framework designed to systematically identify, monitor and support students at risk of unsatisfactory course progress. It aligns with Nexus Institute's policies on early intervention, trimester-end monitoring and subsequent sanctions such as course exclusion. The process emphasises proactive engagement, timely intervention, and clear escalation pathways to support student success while maintaining academic standards. A detailed description of the System is contained in the Progress and Intervention Policy.

The ARMS Register is used to record students-at-risk, the additional support provided and the student's response to it. The Register has three levels of targeted support to match the student's circumstances.

- Helpful advice for students needing encouragement and advice – monitoring card to track progress, reminders about good study habits, reminders about assignment deadlines, recommended skills workshops, contact details for seeking further advice. This is an early intervention stage to assist students in making the transition to higher education.
- Help services for students making unsatisfactory progress – learning contract with required follow up reporting, formal registration in skills workshops, agreed goals for learning and progress, contact details for seeking further advice. This intervention addresses poor results or continuing lack of engagement.
- Show cause to justify continuing in the course – opportunity for the student to explain why they have not met the required milestones and to demonstrate how they will progress satisfactorily toward completing

their degree. This stage addresses continuing unsatisfactory progress after a period of intervention. A student who fails to show cause and demonstrate improvement may be excluded.

- (c) *Processes to ensure that students have access to support services and adequate information about the existence of support services and how to access them.* This policy describes the academic and student support services provided by Nexus Institute. Information about support services and how to access them is available on the Nexus Institute website.

Access to academic advice and student support is available during business hours by contacting Reception. Emergency and after hours support is available by contacting Security.

Orientation sessions in the week before the start of teaching introduce students to the various types of support available to them before the start of each semester. Attendance at an orientation session is mandatory. Supplementary sessions are arranged for students who are unable to attend the orientation before the start of teaching. The orientation briefing is also accessible on the Nexus Institute website. Key details such as contacts for emergency services, health services, counselling, legal advice, advocacy, and accommodation and welfare services are also contained in the Handbook and on the student support pages on the Nexus Institute website.

The general orientation includes the following topics and activities:

- Introduction to Nexus Institute and key staff
- Facilities and campus tour
- Where to find information – *includes a guided tour of the Nexus Institute website and the Student Handbook*
- The Student Code of Conduct and campus rules
- Information technology – *includes training on how to access the Student Portal and email, logging in and password management, ICT etiquette and use of the Learning Management System (successful completion of the training is noted on the student's transcript)*
- Student support, student services and academic support, Learning Skills Centre, Library
- Health and safety, what to do about harassment, discrimination and bullying and sexual harassment and introduction to the SASH module relating to sexual assault and sexual harassment *(successful completion of the SASH Module is noted on the student's transcript)*
- Critical incidents, emergency and health services, welfare services, legal advice
- Living in Sydney, transport, accommodation, banking, local attractions
- Nexus Institute policies – fees and refunds, complaints and appeals
- Course information, academic calendar, class timetable
- Attendance, assessment, course progress
- Academic integrity – *includes training on the Academic Integrity Module (successful completion of the Academic Integrity Module is noted on the student's transcript)*

- Reminder about contact details.

Special orientation support will be available for equity groups and students whose backgrounds indicate they may be at-risk based on past experience of similar students. This support could include introductions to community support groups (for example for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students), conversation classes (for example, for students from non-English speaking backgrounds), competency testing and skills development (for example, for students without a background in programming) and other tailored study skills support.

The Student Centre is the first point of contact and is open to students five days a week during business hours for support and referral.

- (d) *Processes to communicate with students who request access to support services before the census date for their unit of study, at the time they make that request, that the census date is the date they will incur a HECS-HELP or FEE-HELP debt, and how they can access support requested in a timely manner.*

The orientation briefing includes information on the importance of the census date and guidance on access to support services.

Nexus Institute does not currently have approval for HECS-HELP or FEE-HELP.

- (e) *Proactive processes to ensure that students identified as at risk are able to engage with those support services.*

The Progress and Intervention Policy explains how Nexus Institute takes account of previous failures to complete subjects and low levels of participation in subjects such as non-attendance and engagement with learning resources online. Orientation sessions introduce students to the various types of support available to them before the start of each semester. Information about support services is provided on the Nexus website. Student engagement and progress is monitored during and at the end of each study period and specific advice and support is provided under the intervention strategy. Subject Coordinators monitor attendance and use of the Learning Management System and contact students in their classes who are deemed at risk. Subject Coordinators also send reminders to students about approaching deadlines for assignments. Students still identified as at risk are contacted by the Student Centre. The intervention strategy is monitored through regular meetings between the student and their adviser. The Student Centre is the first point of contact for students and is open to students five days a week during business hours for support and referral.

The ARMS Register tracks interventions and student progress. The Register is reviewed at the end of each trimester by the Board of Examiners. Generally, students who achieve their learning goals and improve their performance move to a lower level of intervention or leave the Register if they demonstrate satisfactory continuing progress. Students whose performance continues to be unsatisfactory may move to a higher intervention level.

- (f) *Processes for providing non-academic support to students, including mental health support.*

The Student Centre is the first point of contact for students for non-academic support and is open to students five days a week during business hours for

support and referral. Support includes wellbeing and career advice and development of career skills. Professionally qualified Counsellors provide a confidential service to assist students manage difficulties as they arise. The Counsellors assist students with support in addressing a wide range of personal, academic, social and psychological issues that may impact on their wellbeing. Counsellors may refer students to external agencies for specialised support.

- (g) *Processes for identifying students in need of targeted individual literacy, numeracy and other academic support and delivering this support.*

The Progress and Intervention Policy explains how Nexus Institute identifies students who are not making satisfactory academic progress and provides timely and targeted support to assist them in their studies. Support services include learning skills programs, English language development classes and numeracy. Support is offered through workshops for small groups of students and through learning resources online.

- (h) *Processes for ensuring that students who report non-academic issues that put them at risk of not successfully completing their units of study, are proactively offered academic adjustment arrangements and academic and non-academic support services.*

The Progress and Intervention Policy explains how Nexus Institute develops and provides specific support as part of the intervention strategy. This usually involves a learning contract and regular meetings with an adviser to monitor the progress of the intervention strategy. In addition, individual plans are developed for students with ongoing wellness needs or disabilities. These plans are forwarded to the student's subject coordinators to facilitate extensions for assessment tasks and other mechanisms for special consideration.

- (i) *Details of any other support provided by the provider, such as peer support services.*

Nexus Institute does not currently offer peer support services.

- (j) *Processes for providing academic support to students in relation to their subjects.*

Academic staff having regular contact with their students to check their progress and provide extra support. This includes extensions for assessment tasks and other forms of special consideration where it is warranted by a student's circumstances. Academic staff schedule one hour a week outside class time to be available for regular and timely engagement with students to answer questions and provide academic advice. Students may also contact academic staff online outside scheduled consultation times. Additional academic advice is available from Course Directors and the Executive Dean on request.

- (k) *Arrangements for crisis and critical harm response for students.*

The Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy and Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy detail the processes reporting incidents and the support available through the Institute. Information is available on the Institute website and on posters on campus. Training is provided to students and staff. The Critical Incident Policy sets out procedures for responding to critical incidents and providing support and counselling to those affected during and after the incident.

- (l) *Arrangements for culturally appropriate academic and non-academic support, including specific arrangements for First Nations students and students with disability.*

The Equity and Diversity Policy commits Nexus Institute to creating an environment where every individual can thrive and reach their full potential. The policy sets out specific support strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culturally and linguistically diverse people and people with a disability. Approaches to enhance equity include English language proficiency and academic skills, cultural transition, emotional wellbeing, special consideration for student experiencing hardship or managing disabilities and scholarships for financial support.

- (m) *Arrangements for students who have experienced family and domestic violence, students who have experienced aggravated or sexual assault and students who have experienced traumatic events.*

The Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy and Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy detail the processes reporting incidents and the support available through the Institute. The Assessment Policy explains the special consideration available for students with compassionate or compelling circumstances such as experiences involving family and domestic violence or other traumatic events. The Counsellors provide a confidential service to assist students in addressing a wide range of personal, academic, social and psychological issues that may impact on their wellbeing.

The policy will be reviewed annually to monitor the implementation of the policy and identify opportunities for improvement and to ensure it complies with the legislative requirements.

6. Roles and responsibilities

The Registrar is responsible for implementing and monitoring the policy. The Registrar will provide an annual report to the Academic Board and the Board of Directors which includes de-identified information on

- The promotion of the policy
- The compliance of the policy with the legislative requirements
- The delivery of the support services described in the policy
- How the support services made available were determined and the effectiveness of these services
- How the support services were assessed to determine their appropriateness and effectiveness
- Improvements made to the support services, outcomes provided to students and information on complaints received from students
- Examples of the support serviced assisted students in achieving success in their subjects
- How appropriate resources for delivering student support were determined.

7. Related information

- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021

- Higher Education Provider Amendment (Support for Students Policy) Guidelines 2023 <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2023L01679>
- TEQSA Guidance note: Diversity and Equity (11 October 2017) <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/guides-resources/resources/guidance-notes/guidance-note-diversity-and-equity>

8. Document control

Category	Operational
HESF Standard	1.3, 2.2, 2.3, 7.2
Policy name	Student Support Policy
Policy owner	Registrar
Policy approver	Board of Directors on the recommendation of the Academic Board
Date of approval	Academic Board 21 May 2025; Board of Directors
Date of next review	1 January 2026
Change log	Version 0. Original version created on 20 December 2023.
	Version 1. Feedback from Board of Directors incorporated on 14 Jan 24.
	Section 4 updated noting changes to student visa procedures.
	Section 4 updated to include more on academic advising and description of orientation in Section 5 expanded on 14 Aug 24.
	Version 2 (21 May 2025). Strategies for orientation support for transition and students-at-risk expanded.