

POLICY AND PROCEDURE			
Doc #: PP - 2.16		Wellbeing	
NVETR (Outcome Standards for NVR RTOs) Instrument 2025: 2.6	NC: 6		
HESF (Threshold Standards) 2021: 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.3			
Rev #: 2	Approved By: Deputy MD	Date: 3/10/2025	

REVISION HISTORY			
Rev	Description of Change	Author	Effective Date
1	New Policy	Compliance	30/06/2025
2	Revised 5.1.2 and 5.2.3 the staff member may identify concerns or signs of distress and inform the individual of available support services.	Compliance	3/10/2025

1.0 Purpose

1.1 Academies Australasia Colleges (the College), as listed in [Schedule 1](#), are committed to providing an environment that promotes and supports the wellbeing of all individuals who come to their campuses for study or work. The College is committed to identifying the wellbeing needs of its student cohort and providing support strategies responsive to individual needs. The College also recognises that wellbeing includes protection from harmful behaviour, including Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH) or bullying and harassment. All staff and students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own wellbeing.

1.3 This policy and procedure ensures that the College complies with the requirements outlined by the NVETR (Outcome Standards for NVR RTOs) Instrument 2025, the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 and relevant state regulatory bodies.

2.0 Scope

2.1 This policy and procedure applies to staff and students of the College. This includes, but is not limited to, individuals who:

- a) disclose that they have mental health and wellbeing concern;
- b) request support or seek conversations regarding their mental health;
- c) exhibit signs of depression, anxiety, or are struggling to cope with the normal stresses of life;
- d) have expressed, either directly or indirectly, thoughts of self-harm, suicidal, or violence towards self, or others; or
- e) have experienced or disclosed distress associated with trauma, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, or family violence, and who seek emotional or mental health support in relation to such experience.

3.0 Definitions

Term	Definition
Anxiety	<p>Means, anxiety conditions, such as panic disorder, social anxiety disorder, and generalised anxiety disorder, are the most common mental health conditions in Australia. While each condition has its own specific symptoms, anxiety conditions have a number of features in common including: fear/worry about something bad; avoidance of situations linked to the fear/s; and physical agitation, restlessness, tension and/or panic attacks.</p> <p>While many people may experience stress or anxious feelings that are a common and often normal reaction to a specific event, anxiety conditions are different and are characterised by anxious feelings</p>

	<p>which are ongoing, continue even after a stressful event, or arise without any particular reason or cause.</p> <p>If left untreated anxiety can be a serious condition that can impact on daily life.</p>
Active Bystander	An individual who witnesses harmful or concerning behaviour (e.g. harassment, bullying, signs of distress) and intervenes appropriately to prevent escalation or report the matter.
Consent	Free and voluntary agreement to engage in a specific act. Consent is invalidated if a person is asleep, intoxicated, under duress, intimidated, deceived, or otherwise lacks the capacity to provide informed agreement ¹ .
Critical incident (individual)	Means an event, or series of events, that has a stressful impact sufficient enough to potentially overwhelm the usually effective coping skills of a person.
Depression	<p>Means a common mental health condition, characterised by prolonged sadness (greater than two weeks), loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt or low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, feelings of tiredness and poor concentration.</p> <p>Depression can be one-off, recurrent or ongoing. Active depression can substantially impair a person's ability to function at work or school or cope with daily life².</p>
Early intervention	Services and support provided in the early stages of a potential mental health condition, which focus on assessing and dealing with social, emotional or behavioural issues to improve mental health outcomes by preventing or reducing adverse consequences.
First Responder	The first staff member to receive a disclosure or witness mental distress, trauma, or SASH-related incident.
Incident	An occurrence that has an adverse impact on people, including events that result in injury, illness, equipment failure, or "near misses" when there is potential for injury.
Mental health	A state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to her or his community ³ .
Mental health condition	A mental health condition is a clinical condition (such as anxiety, depression or PTSD) diagnosed by a mental health professional that significantly interferes with a person's cognitive, emotional or social abilities (to varying degrees of severity) ⁴ .
Safety	Is a state of freedom from harm.
Self-harm	Deliberate injury or harm to oneself. It is usually done in secret and on parts of the body that may not be seen by others.
Sexual assault	When a person is forced, coerced or tricked into sexual acts against their will or without their consent ⁵ .

¹ Proposal 16-3, Australian Law Reform Commission, Available online at <https://www.alrc.gov.au/publication/family-violence-improving-legal-frameworks-alrc-cps-1/16-sexual-offences/consent/>

² <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/depression>

³ Mental Health, World Health Organisation, Available at https://www.who.int/health-topics/mental-health#tab=tab_1

⁴ Mental Disorders, World Health Organisation, Available at <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-disorders>

⁵ NSW Police Force, Available at https://portal.police.nsw.gov.au/adultsexualassault/s/whatissexualassault?language=en_US

	<p>Sexual assault can include but is not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● rape e.g. being forced to have vaginal, anal or oral sex including digital penetration. ● unwanted touching e.g. pinching, patting, embracing, rubbing, groping, flicking, kissing, fondling, being touched on the breasts, bottom, legs etc. ● obscene gestures e.g. simulating masturbation in front of a person ● voyeurism e.g. being watched doing intimate things without permission. ● pressuring for dates or demand for sex e.g. invitations that turn into threats or not taking 'no' for an answer ● indecent exposure e.g. someone showing private parts of their body or 'flashing' their genitals ● being forced to watch or participate in pornography e.g. taking a photo without permission, forcing someone to be on video, making someone watch a pornographic movie.
Sexual harassment	<p>Any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favours or conduct of a sexual nature in relation to the person harassed in circumstances where a reasonable person would have anticipated the possibility that the person harassed would be offended, humiliated or intimidated (Federal Sex Discrimination Act, 1984).</p> <p>Sexual harassment can take various forms and can involve conduct such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● unwelcome touching, hugging or kissing ● staring or leering ● suggestive comments or jokes ● sexually explicit pictures, screen savers or posters ● unwanted invitations to go out on dates or requests for sex ● intrusive questions about a someone's private life or body ● unnecessary familiarity, such as deliberately brushing up against someone ● insults or taunts of a sexual nature ● sexually explicit emails, SMS messages or social media ● accessing sexually explicit internet sites ● inappropriate advances on social networking sites
Staff	<p>Any staff member who works for the College or related entity and is within the premises either on an employment or contracted role. This includes contracted trainers and assessors, full time employees, part time employees, casual employees.</p>
Stress	<p>A response to an event or situation which can be positive or negative. Stress is common in daily life and may be associated with work, family or personal relationships. It usually means that something is happening that's challenging our coping mechanisms and affecting how we are thinking and feeling.</p>

Suicidal intentions	Refers to thoughts, feelings, or expressions about wanting to end one's life, or planning or intending to cause self-harm with the aim of ending life. These may include verbal statements, written expressions, or behavioural indicators suggesting the person is in psychological distress and may be at risk of harming themselves.
Suicide intervention	A direct effort to prevent someone from attempting to take their own life intentionally
Suicide prevention	An umbrella term for targeted efforts to reduce the incidence of suicide.
Risk	In relation to any potential injury or harm, the likelihood and consequence of that injury or harm occurring.

4.0 Responsibilities

4.1 Staff – As a duty of care, all staff on the College premises are responsible for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of themselves and others while on duty. They must report to the Campus Manager/ Student Services Manager / Designated Head if they have reasons to believe that a student is experiencing stress, anxiety, depression or a mental health condition.

4.2 Students – Students are encouraged to take an active role in maintaining their health and wellbeing and seek support as early as possible if experiencing stress, anxiety, depression, or other mental health concerns. Students may contact a support person, Student Services, the Student Counsellor, or another trusted staff member for assistance.

4.3 Managers and Designated Heads of Department – Managers and Heads of Department are responsible for monitoring the safety and wellbeing of their teams and student cohorts; responding promptly to wellbeing concerns or incidents in accordance with the College's policies and procedures; and ensuring staff and students are aware of and know how to access support services

4.4 Trainers, Assessors and Lecturers – Trainers, Assessors, and Lecturers are often the first point of contact for students. In addition to their academic responsibilities, they provide support and assistance to students. If any Trainer, Assessor, or Lecturer has reason to believe that a student is experiencing stress, anxiety, depression, a mental health condition, or related needs, they must promptly report this to the Course Coordinator.

4.5 Academic Advisor - Academic advisor provides individual support for all types of academic skills and orientation to academic life. Academic advisor must report to Course Coordinator if they have reasons to believe that the student is experiencing stress, anxiety, depression, mental health condition, or related needs.

4.6 Course Coordinator (CC) – The CC is responsible for monitoring student progress, identifying students who may be at risk or experiencing difficulties, and referring them to appropriate support services. CC works closely with trainers, assessors, and student services to help maintain a supportive learning environment that promotes student wellbeing and success. The CC may refer the student to the Counsellor, if they have reasons to believe or it has been reported by the TA or

Academic Advisor or other staff that the student is experiencing stress, anxiety, depression, mental health condition.

4.7 WH&S Officer – The Work Health and Safety (WHS) Officer is responsible for supporting the College in maintaining a safe and secure working and learning environment.

4.8 Counsellor – Staff responsible for providing counselling to students or staff.

4.9 Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – CEO has overall accountability for ensuring the College upholds its obligations regarding student and staff wellbeing, safety, and compliance with regulatory requirements.

5.0 Procedure

5.1 Process Details (Encounter and response to an individual with concern)

5.1.1 A student or staff member identifies another student or staff member who appears to be experiencing a mental health or wellbeing concern. This may be based on noticeable changes in behaviour or appearance, such as:

- a) Appearing unusually withdrawn, spacey, or confused
- b) Looking dishevelled, untidy, or neglecting personal hygiene
- c) Showing signs of agitation, distress, or extreme mood changes
- d) Frequently missing classes, meetings, or deadlines without explanation
- e) Expressing feelings of hopelessness, overwhelm, or burnout
- f) Acting out of character (e.g. unusually irritable, fatigued, or disengaged)

5.1.2 If a student or staff member raises a concern about another individual's mental health or wellbeing, the matter must be referred to an appropriate staff member such as Manager or a Designated Head. At an appropriate time and in a private, respectful setting within the College, the staff initiates a conversation and gathers information about the individual of concern. Where appropriate, the staff member may identify concerns or signs of distress and inform the individual of available support services. If the individual discloses an experience of sexual assault, sexual harassment, or related trauma, the staff member must:

- a) Advise the individual of their right to speak confidentially with the Counsellor.

5.1.3 If the staff believes there is a concern or risk of wellbeing/mental health condition that may lead to a critical incident, the staff should:

- a) Call emergency services (000) where appropriate.
- b) Notify the CEO or escalate to senior management in the CEO's absence.
- c) Initiate the College's critical incident response, while maintaining confidentiality.

5.1.4 If the staff identifies a wellbeing or mental health concern that is not considered a critical incident, they must still report it through the College's appropriate reporting process. This will engage the College's counselling service.

5.1.5 Upon receiving the report, the Counsellor will reach out to the individual and offer counselling support.

5.1.6 With the individual's consent, the Counsellor may conduct a wellbeing and risk assessment and provide advice on support options and possible next steps. The Counsellor may also, with consent, share relevant recommendations with the Designated Heads of Department to ensure appropriate support is in place.

5.1.7 Where the wellbeing concern involves a potential or actual critical incident (e.g. thoughts of suicide, threat of self-harm, threats to others, or trauma disclosures), the staff will escalate the incident without delay and provide a written report of the incident and to alert manager, the designated head and the CEO using the applicable reporting form used by the College.

5.2 General guidelines

5.2.1 While the procedure for this policy only states a general situation, real life scenarios can be uniquely different with various kind of risk situations. Early intervention and consultation with the Counsellor will be organised if any individual shows signs of distress or expresses concerns related to their behaviour mental health.

5.2.2 The College is committed to providing a safe and healthy learning and work environment for all staff and students. Every reasonable effort is made to prevent incidents, protect employees and students from any risk, and to promote the mental health, safety and welfare of all employees and students. The College will make available appropriate resources to ensure that it complies in all respects of this policy and relevant legislations, and to ensure that the workplace is a safe and inclusive to everyone including diverse groups and First Nations people.

5.2.3 Where wellbeing concerns are linked to trauma or experiences of Sexual Assault or Sexual Harassment (SASH), the staff must take a compassionate approach, including:

- a) Offering support without requiring formal complaint;
- b) Respecting the individual's right to choose whether to make a report;
- c) Providing referrals to counselling;
- d) Ensuring the person is aware of external supports such as 1800RESPECT, mental health helplines, or legal aid.

5.2.4 Staff, students and contractors are encouraged to act as active bystanders when witnessing inappropriate or concerning behaviours. This includes noticing warning signs, safely intervening if appropriate, or reporting the concern to the relevant staff of the College.

5.2.5 The College works closely with its preferred OSHC provider and state based Study Hubs that offer a range of support and welfare and counselling services to the students.

6.0 External Resources and Links

Other external organisational links with resources that may be helpful include:

- Beyond Blue - Provides information and support to help everyone in Australia achieve their best possible mental health. <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>
- Mental Health Helpline 1800 011 511 - <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/Pages/default.aspx>
- Lifeline Australia 131114 - Lifeline is a national charity providing all Australians experiencing a personal crisis with access to 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention. <https://www.lifeline.org.au/>
- Free digital mental health support from SilverCloud Health - <https://honeysuckle.silvercloudhealth.com/signup/honeysucklenuw/support/>
- Black Dog Institute - A resource for information, clinical research and helpful contacts to help those with mood disorders such as depression, anxiety and bipolar disorder. Website: <https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/>
- Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800- Web Chat and email counselling available: counsellor@kidshelpline.com.au Website: <https://kidshelpline.com.au/>
- The Happiness Trap - An 8 week program that helps to build genuine happiness from the inside out. <https://thehappinesstrap.com/>
- The Way Up - This Way Up courses – take control of wellbeing, these courses have been clinically proven to help. <https://thiswayup.org.au/>
- MindSpot –a site that supports your emotional wellbeing, complete an online assessment and select a course that will support any symptoms of stress, worry, anxiety, low mood and depression. You will learn proven skills to manage emotional wellbeing and improve quality of life. <https://www.mindspot.org.au/>
- Head to Health - help to find the right digital mental health resources for your needs. <https://www.headtohealth.gov.au/>

- Head Space - Helping you understand and work through life's challenges.
<https://headspace.org.au/>
- [MoodGym](https://moodgym.com.au/) – an interactive self-help book which helps you to learn and practise skills which can help to prevent and manage symptoms of depression and anxiety.
<https://moodgym.com.au/>
- Mental Health First Aid – Complete a course to support mental health first aid skills and this will allow individuals to support someone developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. <https://mhfa.com.au/>
- [Suicide Prevention and response in Victoria](#)
- [Partners in wellbeing](#)
- [Centre for Culture Ethnicity Health](#) - Improving the health and wellbeing of people from migrant and refugee
- VIC [Well Fed](#) Meals Program
- [Urgent Care Clinics](#)

7.0 References

- 7.1 NVETR (Outcome Standards for NVR RTOs) Instrument 2025
- 7.2 National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
- 7.3 Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- 7.4 Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
- 7.5 Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) Act 1986
- 7.6 Mental Health Act 2007
- 7.7 Disability Discrimination Act (1992)

8.0 Appendices

- 8.1 Critical Incident & Hazard Reporting form
- 8.2 Critical Incident & Hazard Register
- 8.3 Critical Incident & Hazard Reporting & Investigation Policy and Procedure
- 8.4 AAPoly Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure
- 8.5 Student Handbook_VET
- 8.6 Student Handbook_HE

Schedule 1

Academies Australasia Institute (AAI)
Academies Australasia Polytechnic (AAPoly)
Australian College of Technology (ACT)
Clarendon Business College (CBC)
Supreme Business College (SBC)
Skills Training Australasia (STA)
Benchmark College (BMC)
Vostro Institute of Training Australia (Vostro)
Australian International High School (AIHS)
Academies Australasia Hair and Beauty (AAHB)