

# Student Support Policy

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## 1. Purpose and Context

- 1.1 This policy provides a framework for ensuring all students at Perth Bible College have access to appropriate student support services, regardless of their place or mode of study.
- 1.2 This policy outlines the support available to students who are identified as students at risk of not successfully completing their units of study (Student Course Progress Policy) to assist them to successfully complete their units of study including the Perth Bible College's processes for ensuring that students are aware of these support options.
- 1.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with the guidelines and procedures sections of his policy and other relevant policies, including *Student Support Procedure, Student Course Progress Policy, Student Course Progress Procedure, Student Code of Conduct, Critical Incident Management Policy, and Critical Incident Management Procedure.*

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all staff and students at Perth Bible College.

## 3. Responsibility

- 3.1 The Principal is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

## 4. Definitions

<b>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</b>	A person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives (High Court of Australia [1983]).
<b>ESOS Legislative Framework</b>	The legislative framework that regulates the responsibilities of education institutions towards overseas students on student visas and includes the National Code.
<b>Formative Assessment</b>	Information collected (generally via a range of formal and informal methods) during a course to determine student progress towards course outcomes or learning goals. Its purpose is to provide feedback in order to adapt or change teaching content or approaches, or to adapt or change student learning and study strategies.

<b><i>International Student</i></b>	A student studying in Australia on a student visa issued by DoHA.
<b><i>Orientation</i></b>	A program that is run at the beginning of each study period to provide students who are new to Perth Bible College with relevant information and support to become familiar with, and confident about, College life.

## 5. Guiding Principles

- 5.1 Perth Bible College is committed to ensuring that all students receive adequate support throughout their course to help them achieve a successful course outcome. Additionally, Perth Bible College recognises that some students may face challenges as they progress through their course. All student support services are available at no cost to Perth Bible College students.
- 5.2 Perth Bible College is committed to encouraging student success and student retention, with a committee of academic and administration staff implementing retention strategies and processes.

## 6. Policy Provisions

### 6.1 Admissions and Enrolment

- 6.1.1 During the Admissions process, as stipulated in the *Admissions Policy* and accompanying procedure, Perth Bible College ensures that prospective students:
- are fully informed of requirements and expectations for study through access to prospectuses focused on either domestic or international students;
  - are guided through the admissions process and informed of progress made through this process at appropriate times;
  - are informed of the processes in place to assist them in the event unforeseen circumstances arise; and
  - are invited to supply information relating to their first language, any disability, impairment, or long-term medical condition which may affect their studies, cultural heritage, and whether they require additional advice about support services, equipment and facilities that may assist in their studies.
- 6.1.2 Information disclosed during the Admissions process will be used to assess the needs of individual prospective students and, in consultation with the student, to create an individualised Student Support Plan where required.
- 6.1.3 During their enrolment at Perth Bible College, students will be provided with timely, consistent, and accurate advice on all matters related to enrolment, including:
- information relating to courses and suitability for individual students;
  - withdrawals and deferrals;
  - transfer of enrolment;
  - financial support available;
  - student services available;
  - facilities and services for people living with a disability, as per section 6.7; and

- support services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as per section 6.8.

## **6.2 Orientation**

- 6.2.1 Perth Bible College conducts an orientation program to assist students commencing their studies. Orientation is scheduled during the week immediately preceding the first week of a teaching semester.
- 6.2.2 The Dean of Students is responsible for the delivery of the orientation program.
- 6.2.3 The orientation program provides students with information regarding:
- support services for personal and academic related issues;
  - support services for international students to assist with adjustment to study and life in Australia;
  - accommodation and welfare services;
  - mental health services;
  - legal services;
  - advocacy services;
  - emergency and health services;
  - general safety in Australia;
  - services available to provide students with information on their employment rights and conditions, and how to resolve workplace issues;
  - safety on-campus;
  - the College's facilities and resources;
  - requirements for course attendance (if any) and progress;
  - the College's policies and procedures, including how to access them;
  - the College's complaints and appeals processes;
  - the College's process for reporting critical incidents; and
  - the College's study assistance programs, including how to access English tutoring.
- 6.2.4 Students unable to attend the orientation program will have an opportunity to attend an online orientation session.
- 6.2.5 Students will have continued access to the information disclosed during the orientation program via the online orientation module in the PBC Online platform.

### **6.3 Student Wellbeing**

- 6.3.1 All support services available to students are continually improved according to feedback received from student cohorts, including issues surrounding mental health, disability, and wellbeing needs.
- 6.3.2 Perth Bible College will take all reasonable steps to provide a safe environment on campus.
- 6.3.3 Students and staff will be advised about actions they can take to enhance their personal security and safety.
- 6.3.4 Perth Bible College encourages its students to report any behaviour that contravenes the *Student Code of Conduct*, or otherwise impacts on their sense of safety.

### **6.4 Pastoral Support**

- 6.4.1 Perth Bible College is committed to providing pastoral care to its students via the following:
- faculty and senior student supervised 'Growth Groups'; and
  - one-on-one sessions as requested by students, faculty advisors, the Dean of Students and/or as part of a unit of study.
- 6.4.2 Perth Bible College also recognises that the primary source of pastoral care is the church that the student attends. As such, the College aims to work together with the student's respective church, ensuring the student nominates a local church and leader who will be responsible for their pastoral care in their church setting.
- 6.4.3 As the College seeks to work with the student's nominated church leader, it will always obtain consent from the student prior to the disclosure of personal information related to the student.

### **6.5 Mental Health**

- 6.5.1 Perth Bible College recognises the diverse nature of mental health conditions and the varying impact they may have on different people. Perth Bible College supports students through providing equitable access to all its courses and programs.
- 6.5.2 Perth Bible College will take all reasonable steps to accommodate requests with respect to student mental health conditions, providing that:
- the student continues to meet enrolment requirements;
  - the academic standing of the College is maintained; and
  - a safe College community is maintained.

- 6.5.3 For students who disclose mental health concerns, the Dean of Students, in consultation with the student, will liaise with all other relevant third parties to ensure individualised care plans for academic and emotional support are implemented and maintained.
- 6.5.4 Students wishing or needing to be counselled on a professional basis may ask to be referred by Perth Bible College to a counselling, psychology, or psychiatric service. Students will be responsible for all fees incurred when accessing the services provided by health professionals.
- 6.5.5 Perth Bible College will welcome assessments and guidance from medical and other health professionals as it seeks to provide reasonable accommodation to enable equitable access for each student.
- 6.5.6 All information relating to student mental health is confidential and will only be disclosed to third parties with the prior, fully-informed knowledge and consent of the student concerned.

## **6.6 Academic Support**

- 6.6.1 Perth Bible College identifies students requiring additional academic support by:
- the student disclosing a need for academic support via the admissions process;
  - observation of a pattern of continuous late assessment submissions, or failure to complete assessments;
  - the quality of assessment submissions, including their English proficiency;
  - access to the online learning system, PBCOnline; and
  - student attendance if the student is an international student.
- 6.6.2 Perth Bible College provides information to its students regarding academic support services and encourages its students to access the following:
- Grammarly.
  - Pro-Writing Aid.
  - Tutoring.
- 6.6.3 All new students are encouraged to enrol in the Study Ready unit, which prepares students for tertiary studies at Perth Bible College.
- 6.6.4 The Dean of Studies will provide feedback on course performance and course progression, and the faculty will provide feedback on subject or unit progression.

- 6.6.5 Academic staff will facilitate access to learning support services, regardless of place or mode of study.
- 6.6.6 Students who are identified as 'at risk' of unsatisfactory course progress will be asked to meet with the Dean of Studies to discuss being placed on an intervention strategy, as outlined in the *Student Course Progress Policy*, and accompanying procedure.

## **6.7 Disability Inclusion and Support**

- 6.7.1 For students who disclose specific physical health concerns, the Dean of Students, in consultation with the student, will liaise with other relevant third parties to ensure that individualised health care plans for academic and emotional support are implemented and maintained.
- 6.7.2 Perth Bible College will take all reasonable steps to ensure equal access to its programs for students who disclose a disability or learning difficulty.

## **6.8 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students**

- 6.8.1 Students identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander will be given special consideration for the participation and completion of their courses, providing that:
- the students continue to meet enrolment requirements; and
  - the academic standing of the College is maintained.

## **6.9 Flexible Learning Students**

- 6.9.1 Academic staff will maintain regular contact with online students to ensure they are receiving appropriate learning support.
- 6.9.2 Flexible Learning students have access to discussion forums to enhance student-to-student communication.
- 6.9.3 Flexible Learning students are encouraged to join the internal, on-campus student cohort in communal activities where possible.

## **6.10 International Students**

- 6.10.1 The official point of contact for international students is the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will provide international students with access to information regarding support services available and relevant to individual students' needs.
- 6.10.2 Perth Bible College will ensure that international students are provided with access to information and advice which meets the statutory requirements under the ESOS Legislative Framework.

6.10.3 Delivery of information will be provided by the most effective and direct method of communication.



## **6.11 Retention Strategy**

- 6.11.1 Perth Bible College is dedicated to incorporating processes and procedures to ensure high student retention rates in its courses.
- 6.11.2 Perth Bible College will ensure that its students have access to regular dissemination of information in order to promote student awareness of support services available and build a sense of belonging and community.
- 6.11.3 Perth Bible College conducts entry interviews to review the needs of the current student cohort, ensuring services are informed by these needs.
- 6.11.4 Perth Bible College conducts exit interviews with students to gain feedback on the student experience to keep policies and procedures student-centred.
- 6.11.5 Students who have withdrawn from units are invited to nominate a re-enrolment date, at which point they are invited to recommence their studies at the College. Otherwise, an exit interview is conducted.
- 6.11.6 Perth Bible College facilitates communal lunches and other activities to foster a sense of increased belonging and community between staff and students.
- 6.11.7 Perth Bible College utilises nested programs where practical to increase the ease of transition between courses.
- 6.11.8 Students have the opportunity to sign a work contract, subject to availability, through which they receive financial support in their studies.
- 6.11.9 Additionally, Perth Bible College enhances its student retention via the use of other student support services as outlined in this policy.

## **6.12 Staff Training**

- 6.12.1 The Dean of Students will ensure all information related to student services, both internal and external, is up to date and relevant. This information is shared with all staff to ensure students are kept informed regarding the student support services available to them.
- 6.12.2 Perth Bible College will ensure staff are given adequate training, so they are aware of their obligations under the ESOS Legislative Framework and the potential implications for international students arising from the exercise of their obligations, with particular respect to student support services.

## 6. Policy Information

<b>Date first approved:</b> July 2021	<b>Date of effect:</b> July 2021	<b>Date last amended:</b> 16/08/2021	<b>Date of next review:</b> 16/08/2022
<b>Approved by</b>		Principal	
<b>Authorised Officer</b>		Dean of Students	
<b>Supporting documents, procedures &amp; forms of this policy</b>		<i>Student Support Procedure</i> <i>Student Course Progress Policy</i> <i>Student Course Progress Procedure</i> <i>Student Code of Conduct</i> <i>Critical Incident Management Policy</i> <i>Critical Incident Management Procedure</i>	
<b>Related Legislation and Codes of Practice</b>		<u><i>Higher Education Standards Framework 2015, Part A: Standard 2.3</i></u> <u><i>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2011</i></u> <u><i>National Code 2018, Standard 6</i></u> <u><i>Disability Standards for Education 2005</i></u>	
<b>Audience</b>		Public	

## 7. Version History

Review Table			
Date	Review Type <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scheduled</li> <li>Policy amendment</li> <li>Admin update</li> </ul>	Summary of Changes	Review person/group
15/08/2019	Policy amendment	New template and amendments made.	Natalie Tierney Capital Review Group consultant
28/07/2021	Scheduled review	Minor typographical and grammatical changes to facilitate greater clarity of intent.	PBC Board of Management
16/08/2021	Admin update	Small errors fixed.	Chris Burton
24/08/2022	Admin update	Grammatical fixes and general cleanup.	Stephen Young Dean of Studies
21/12/2023	Policy amendment	Amendments made following the <a href="#">Federal Register of Legislation - Higher Education Provider Amendment (Support for Students Policy) Guidelines 2023</a> .	Becky Shaw Dean of Students