

## STUDENT SUPPORT, WELLBEING, AND HEALTH POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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Policy Lead	Director of Learning and Innovation
Approving Authority	Board of Directors
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Relevant legislation or external requirements	National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (NC: 6) Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HESFs: 2.3) Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Cth) Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act 2000) Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2001 Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act)
Related ASA Documents	Critical Incident Management Plan Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure Mental Health Framework Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure Student Code of Conduct Student Enrolment and Attendance Policy and Procedure Student Grievance Policy Student Grievance Procedure Student Handbook Student Support Framework Work Health and Safety Policy Work Health and Safety Procedure

### 1. Purpose

This Policy and Procedure outlines the general context, purpose and principles of ASA Institute of Higher Education's (ASA's) approach to student support, wellbeing, and health, and the circumstances under which it should be implemented. The primary aim of this policy and procedure is to ensure that students can, with appropriate, coordinated adjustments and support, participate safely, appropriately, and successfully in all aspects of learning and assessment and our activities and community.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all ASA applicants, students, staff, volunteers and contractors.

### 3. Principles

The key principles informing this Policy and Procedure are:

- ASA is dedicated to the holistic development and wellbeing of its student community. We are committed to fostering an environment that nurtures not only academic excellence but also the physical, mental, and emotional health and safety of every student. This commitment is reflected in our support services and initiatives, aiming to create a positive

and thriving learning experience for all.

- ASA values diversity and recognises the unique perspectives and needs of our student body. Our student support services are designed to be inclusive, considering the cultural, social, and individual differences that make each student unique. We strive to create a supportive, safe, and welcoming space for all members of our diverse community.
- ASA prioritises the confidentiality and privacy of student information. We understand the sensitivity of personal matters, and our support services operate under strict confidentiality guidelines. Students can trust that their information will be handled with the utmost care, fostering an environment where they can openly seek assistance without fear of judgment or disclosure.

#### 4. Definitions

Term	Definition
ASA community	ASA community refers to all students and staff members of ASA.
consultation	Consultation is a time for students to seek face-to-face contact with Academic or Administrative staff to raise any issues that they may have.
mental health	Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well, and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in.
mental health awareness programs	Mental health awareness programs are educational initiatives and activities aimed at promoting awareness, understanding, and de-stigmatisation of mental health issues within the student community.
mental wellbeing	Mental wellbeing is how we respond to life's ups and downs. In this simple mental wellbeing definition lies deeper meaning and implication for our lives. It includes how a person thinks, handles emotion (emotional wellness), and acts.
student wellbeing	Student Wellbeing is the holistic state of health, encompassing physical, mental, emotional, and social aspects, contributing to a student's overall quality of life.
support services	Support Services is comprehensive resources and assistance provided by ASA to address the academic, personal, and emotional needs of students.
support staff	Support staff is a member of staff of a higher education provider without an academic staff classification and who provide support functions for teaching and/ or research activities. Examples of 'support functions' include management; academic learning support; English language support; student counselling; librarian; IT support; laboratory assistance; technical assistance; general administrative functions; and student administration functions such as provision of student advice, student admissions, student enrolments and student graduations.

#### 5. Policy Statement

ASA is committed to fostering a holistic and supportive learning environment that promotes overall wellbeing of every student. This Policy and procedure establish a framework for the provision of comprehensive support services, and mental and physical health initiatives. This policy is guided by our dedication to creating an inclusive, safe, and nurturing community where every student can thrive academically, personally, and emotionally.

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

### 6.1 Students

#### 6.1.1 Actively Engage in Support Services

Students are responsible for actively seeking and engaging with available support services, including counselling, and health resources, to enhance their overall wellbeing.

Students are to work cooperatively with ASA staff toward improving their wellbeing including any individual support plans.

#### 6.1.2 Compliance with Policies and Procedures

Students are expected to adhere to ASA's policies and procedures related to health and safety, reporting incidents, and respecting the confidentiality of their peers.

#### 6.1.3 Participation in Wellbeing Initiatives

Students are encouraged to actively participate in mental health awareness programs, physical fitness activities, and wellbeing workshops to contribute to a positive campus culture.

### 6.2 Academic Staff

#### 6.2.1 Awareness and Referral

Academic staff should be aware of the available support services, and when necessary, refer students to appropriate resources, such as counselling services or disability support.

#### 6.2.2 Flexible Academic Support

Academic staff should provide reasonable academic adjustments for students facing health-related challenges, ensuring flexibility, and understanding in assessment deadlines or formats.

#### 6.2.3 Observation and Reporting

Academic staff members are responsible for observing and reporting any concerning behaviour or signs of distress in students, following established incident reporting procedures.

### 6.3 Support Staff

#### 6.3.1 Effective Communication

Support staff must communicate clearly and empathically with students, ensuring that they understand the available support services and how to access them.

#### 6.3.2 Coordination of Wellbeing Activities

Support staff play a key role in coordinating and facilitating mental health awareness programs, physical health initiatives, and other wellbeing activities for the student community.

#### 6.3.3 Maintaining Confidentiality

Support staff are bound by strict confidentiality guidelines and must ensure the privacy of student information when providing assistance or guidance.

#### 6.3.4 First Aid

First Aid Officers appropriately trained to help students with minor medical emergencies on campus.

## 7. Student Support Services

### 7.1 Academic Support

#### 7.1.1 Peer Mentoring

ASA has a peer mentoring program where students who have performed (highly awarded a D or HD grade) in a particular unit can mentor students who require additional support.

#### 7.1.2 Study Skills Workshops

Regular workshops are conducted to help students develop effective study skills, time management, and assessment strategies.

#### 7.1.3 Academic Advising

Academic staff provide personalised guidance to students, helping them navigate academic challenges.

### 7.2 Wellbeing Counselling Services

- A trained Wellbeing Officer offers confidential one-on-one sessions to address personal and emotional challenges that may impact a student's wellbeing.
- External support services and resources are available for students in urgent need of emotional support, ensuring immediate assistance during critical situations.

## 8. Wellbeing Initiatives

ASA regularly advertises and runs a number of wellbeing initiatives to support students. Students are encouraged to attend events that are relevant to their needs.

- ASA is committed to supporting students' wellbeing and establishes fundamental values and beliefs promoting physical, mental, and emotional health and safety, as well as creating an environment that supports personal and academic growth.
- ASA run Mental Health Awareness campaigns including workshops and seminars to raise awareness about mental health, inviting mental health professionals or advocates to speak on campus, and organising various events, activities, and informational sessions for Mental Health awareness. For further information on Mental Health Awareness refer to the Mental Health Framework.
- ASA organises wellness challenges that promote healthy habits, such as step challenges, hydration challenges, or nutrition challenges.
- ASA delivers wellness campaigns to inform students of risks and challenges and promoting a healthy way of life.
- ASA provides Stress Management workshops covering mindfulness and time management workshops, as well as providing a safe and accessible area where students can relax and unwind.

## 9. Health Assistance

ASA provides a safe, secure, and stimulating learning environment, where risk of harm is minimised and students feel physically and emotionally secure, thereby allowing them to reach their full potential.

ASA has emergency response procedures which include comprehensive emergency evacuation plans, trained first aid officers and established protocols to dealing with medical emergencies.

ASA has a list of fixed or low-cost medical service providers that they are referred to as required.

ASA has strategies to provide Mental Health support and resources. These strategies include employing a Wellbeing Officer, provision of crisis intervention resources, online mental health resources and train all staff to enable them to identify signs of distress and offer initial support. The Wellbeing Officer is trained in counselling strategies and basic psychological analysis to assess the type or level of support required. ASA will refer students to appropriate external mental health resources or providers as relevant on a case-by-case basis.

## **10. Procedure Principles**

ASA provides a supportive, safe, and inclusive student environment, and promotes the wellbeing of all students. Whether students are on campus, online or working in groups using social media, chat rooms, etc., ASA ensures that all students are safe and secure at all times.

ASA supports all students through the following:

### **10.1 Student Support Services**

#### **10.1.1 Wellbeing Counselling Services**

ASA provides wellbeing counselling personal one-on-one sessions with a trained Wellbeing Officer to address personal challenges, such as stress and anxiety.

The Wellbeing Officer can offer the following services:

- Needs assessment – conduct regular surveys and assessments to identify prevalent mental health concerns among students.
- Appointment scheduling – students will be able to book an appointment with the Wellbeing Officer using an online booking system.
- Initial Assessment sessions – the Wellbeing Officer can conduct an initial session to understand the student's concerns and assess the level of support needed.
- Personalised Wellbeing Plan – the Wellbeing Officer can develop a personalised wellbeing plan outlining specific goals and strategies for each student.
- Regular Follow-up Sessions – the Wellbeing Officer will continue to monitor and track student progress and will schedule follow-up sessions and adjust the wellbeing plan if necessary.
- Referral to Specialised Services – the Wellbeing Officer will refer cases that require specialised interventions and facilitate referrals to external mental health professionals or services.
- Wellness Workshops – the Wellbeing Officer will conduct workshops focusing on overall wellness, covering topics such as mindfulness, self-care and resilience.

#### **10.1.2 Academic Support**

ASA provides Academic Support to all students.

- Study Skills Workshops are designed to enhance study skills, helping identify preferred learning styles, effective note taking techniques, time management strategies, active reading techniques, critical thinking and analysis, memory techniques, effective group study strategies, efficient usage of digital tools reflective practices, and effective assessment preparation.
- Peer Mentoring program – ASA provides a Peer Mentoring program to help support students who are facing challenges in particular units. This program recruits high achieving students to participate as a peer mentor, offering regular mentoring sessions for students who need additional assistance.

- Accessible Learning Resources – ASA provides students with the access to a variety of learning resources, including textbooks, online materials, and interactive tools.
- Academic Advising – academic staff provide one-on-one sessions of academic coaching to address individual learning needs.

## 10.2 Wellbeing Initiatives

### 10.2.1 Mental Health Awareness Programs

- Workshops and Seminars - ASA runs workshops and seminars to raise awareness about mental health, covering topics such as stress management, resilience, and recognising signs of mental health issues. For further information on Mental Health Awareness refer to the Mental Health Framework.
- Guest Speaker Series - ASA invites mental health professionals or advocates to speak on campus, providing insights and advice on maintaining positive mental health.
- Mental Health Awareness Week - ASA organises an annual Mental Health Awareness Week with various events, activities, and informational sessions to engage the entire student community. For further information on Mental Health Awareness refer to the Mental Health Framework.

### 10.2.2 Wellness Workshops and Campaigns

- Mindfulness Sessions - Conducting mindfulness and meditation sessions to help students manage stress, improve focus, and enhance overall mental wellbeing.
- Time Management Workshops - ASA runs workshops providing practical strategies for effective time management, helping students balance academic and personal responsibilities.
- Relaxation Zones - ASA provides designated relaxation zones on campus where students can unwind, talk with friends, practice relaxation techniques, or simply take a break.
- Wellness Campaigns - ASA is committed to support students and staff's health by delivering educational campaigns to inform about the risks and challenges of life such as substance abuse, stress management, healthy living, and safety.

## 10.3 Health Assistance

### 10.3.1 Emergency Response Procedures

- Emergency Evacuation Plan - ASA has clearly defined procedures for emergency evacuations, including fire drills, and information on emergency exits and assembly points.
- First Aid - ASA has fully trained first aid officers to ensure a quick response to medical emergencies on campus.
- Emergency Medical Assistance - ASA has protocols established for calling emergency medical services and providing first aid until professional help arrives in the event of a medical emergency.

### 10.3.2 Mental Health Resources

- Crisis Intervention Resources - ASA provides information on crisis intervention resources, including contact details for local mental health crisis hotlines and support organisations.
- Online Mental Health Resources - ASA offers information about online platforms and apps that provide mental health resources, self-help tools, and information on managing stress and anxiety.

- Mental Health First Aid - ASA provides mental health first aid training to staff, enabling them to identify signs of distress and offer initial support.

For more information regarding Mental Health support, refer to the *Mental Health Framework*.

## 11. Relevant HESFs

This Policy and the associated Procedure comply with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021. The following are relevant excerpts and specify that:

### Standard 2.3 Wellbeing and Safety

1. All students are advised of the actions they can take, the staff they may contact and the support services that are accessible if their personal circumstances are having an adverse effect on their education.
2. Timely, accurate advice on access to personal support services is available, including for access to emergency services, health services, counselling, legal advice, advocacy, and accommodation and welfare services.
3. The nature and extent of support services that are available for students are informed by the needs of student cohorts, including mental health, disability and wellbeing needs.
4. A safe environment is promoted and fostered, including by advising students and staff on actions they can take to enhance safety and security on campus and online.
5. There is a critical-incident policy together with readily accessible procedures that cover the immediate actions to be taken in the event of a critical incident and any follow-up required.

## 12. Version Control

This Policy and Procedure has been reviewed and approved by ASA's Board of Directors as at January 2024 and is reviewed every three years.

This Policy and Procedure are published and available on the ASA website  
<https://www.asahe.edu.au/policies-and-forms/>.

Change and Version Control				
Version	Authored by	Brief Description of the changes	Date Approved:	Effective Date:
2024.2	Project Officer	Document formatting updated to reflect change of Trading Name to ASA Institute of Higher Education	28/06/2024 by CEO	01/07/2024
2024.1	Director Learning and Innovation	Updated policy to include HESF references, changes in regulatory compliances. Benchmarked against 4 other Higher Education Providers.	29/01/2024	29/01/2024
Previous version archived. New Policy code and numbering system implemented.				
3.0		Academic Board review approval	30/03/2021	
2.0		Academic Board revision approval	09/11/2020	
1.0		Academic Board approval	17/09/2018	