

MITP28 – STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES AND WELFARE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Policy Summary for Students

PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

This policy ensures you have access to comprehensive support services throughout your studies at Menzies Institute of Technology. Whether you need academic help, personal support, or assistance adjusting to life in Australia, the Institute provides a wide range of services to help you succeed. This policy explains what support is available, how to access it, and how the Institute works to create a safe, inclusive, and culturally appropriate learning environment for all students.

KEY SECTIONS OF THE POLICY

What Support Services Are Available?

The Institute provides support in eight key areas aligned with national VET standards:

Information and Communication: Clear, accurate information about all available support services.

Pre-Enrolment Assessment: Guidance to ensure your chosen course suits your skills and goals.

Training Support Services: Academic help including tutoring, study skills, and assessment support.

Reasonable Adjustments: Accommodations for students with disabilities to participate equally.

Diversity and Inclusion: Culturally safe environments, particularly for First Nations students.

Wellbeing Support: Mental health, counselling, financial assistance, and crisis support.

Feedback and Complaints: Processes to address concerns and improve services.

Appeals: Independent review processes when decisions affect your studies.

General Principles

All students have equal access to support services regardless of background. Services are provided in a timely, respectful, and confidential manner. The Institute maintains a duty of care to all students. Support services promote student success, retention, and completion. Cultural safety and diversity are valued and respected. Students are active participants in identifying and accessing support.

UNDERSTANDING AVAILABLE SUPPORT SERVICES

Pre-Training Review and Support Planning

Before You Enrol (Within 5 Days of Application)

You'll complete a pre-training review assessing your language, literacy, numeracy skills, learning support needs, disability accommodation requirements, wellbeing concerns, financial circumstances, and career goals. This isn't a test – it's a conversation to understand how the Institute can best support you.

Within 7 Days: You'll discuss results and develop an Individual Support Plan if needed.

Before Enrolment Confirmation: Your support plan is finalized, identifying specific services you'll need, reasonable adjustments required, wellbeing monitoring arrangements, external service referrals, review schedules, and emergency contact procedures.

Your support plan is a living document reviewed regularly throughout your studies and updated as your needs change.

Academic Support Services

One-on-One Tutoring

Individual sessions scheduled based on your specific needs. Available for all subjects within 5 working days of request. Focuses on areas where you're struggling. Regular monitoring to track improvement.

Group Study Skills Workshops

Time management and organization. Assignment planning and research. Exam preparation strategies. Note-taking and active learning. Academic writing skills.

Assignment Assistance

Help with planning and structuring assignments. Research guidance and library skills. Writing support and proofreading. Referencing and citation help. Understanding assessment requirements.

Exam Preparation Support

Practice tests and study strategies. Stress management techniques. Understanding exam formats. Revision planning.

Peer Mentoring Programs

Connection with successful graduates. Learning from student experiences. Building study networks. Social integration support.

How to Access Academic Support

Talk to your trainer/assessor about specific subject help. Contact Student Services to arrange tutoring or workshops. Attend scheduled support sessions. Participate in peer mentoring programs. Ask for help early – don't wait until you're struggling.

Diversity and Inclusion Support

Cultural Safety for First Nations Students

The Institute recognizes the importance of culturally safe learning environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Available support includes:

Cultural Advisors: Access to First Nations staff or community contacts who understand your cultural needs and can provide guidance.

Flexible Learning Arrangements: Accommodation for cultural obligations, community responsibilities, and Sorry Business.

Culturally Appropriate Materials: Learning resources that respect and include Indigenous perspectives.

Support Networks: Connection with other First Nations students and community organizations.

Cultural Awareness: All staff receive cultural competency training to create respectful environments.

Special Circumstances Support: Understanding and accommodation for family responsibilities, community commitments, and cultural practices.

International Student Support

If you're an international student, additional support helps you adjust to study and life in Australia:

Arrival Support: Airport pickup service (advance booking), temporary accommodation assistance, mobile and internet setup, government services registration, social integration activities, family reunion support.

Ongoing Academic Support: Regular check-ins on progress, language support programs, study skills adapted for international backgrounds, assessment preparation, academic integrity education.

Personal Support: Cultural adjustment counselling, visa condition monitoring and renewal, health insurance guidance, legal service referrals, crisis support with cultural sensitivity.

Community Integration: International student social events, volunteer opportunities, community group connections, local area orientation, Australian student buddy program.

Employment Rights: Information about work rights and conditions, fair workplace practices, Fair Work Ombudsman referrals, resume and interview skills, workplace culture education.

Students from Diverse Backgrounds

Support for students from various backgrounds including LGBTIQ+ students with safe space creation and inclusive language, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds with interpreter services and multicultural support, students experiencing homelessness with emergency accommodation referrals and practical assistance, students experiencing domestic violence with confidential support and safety planning, students with caring responsibilities for flexible attendance arrangements, and young parents with childcare information and family support.

Reasonable Adjustments for Students with Disability

What Are Reasonable Adjustments?

Reasonable adjustments are changes to training delivery or assessment that enable you to participate on an equal basis without disadvantaging other students or compromising the integrity of your qualification.

Examples of Reasonable Adjustments

Assessment Modifications: Extra time for exams, alternative assessment formats, use of assistive technology, quiet exam environments, scribes or readers.

Learning Support: Note-taking assistance, accessible learning materials, recorded lectures, preferential seating, assistive listening devices.

Physical Accommodations: Accessible parking, ramps and elevators, accessible washrooms, adjustable furniture, modified equipment.

Flexibility: Extended deadlines with advance approval, flexible attendance where appropriate, breaks during long sessions, course load adjustments.

Technology: Screen readers and magnification software, speech-to-text software, specialized keyboards, accessible online platforms.

How to Request Reasonable Adjustments

- Step 1: Contact Student Services and discuss your needs confidentially.
- Step 2: Provide documentation of your disability (medical certificates, specialist reports, disability assessments).
- Step 3: Work with the Reasonable Adjustment Committee to develop an adjustment plan.
- Step 4: Your plan is implemented across all your units.
- Step 5: Regular reviews ensure adjustments remain appropriate.

All adjustment discussions are confidential. Adjustments don't lower academic standards – they remove barriers. Your disability information is only shared with staff who need to know to provide support.

Wellbeing Support Services

Mental Health and Counselling

Free, confidential counselling for personal issues, stress and anxiety, depression, relationship problems, family difficulties, grief and loss, trauma, and adjustment challenges.

Professional counsellors are available. Crisis support is available for urgent situations. Regular counselling sessions can be scheduled. Referrals to external specialists if needed.

Financial Support

Emergency financial assistance for unexpected hardship. Payment plan arrangements for course fees. Information about government benefits and support. Referrals to financial counselling services. Budgeting advice and resources.

Housing and Accommodation Support

Emergency accommodation referrals for crisis situations. Information about rental assistance programs. Connection with student housing services. Support for students experiencing homelessness. Advice on tenant rights and responsibilities.

Health and Medical Support

Health insurance information and guidance. GP and medical service referrals. Specialist referrals for specific conditions.
Health screening information. Emergency medical support.

Career and Employment Services

Career counselling and planning. Resume and cover letter help. Interview preparation. Job search strategies. Work placement support. Industry connections and networking.

Legal Services

Referrals to legal aid and community legal services. Information about student rights. Support for visa and immigration matters (international students). Assistance with discrimination or harassment issues. General legal information and guidance.

Crisis Support

24/7 crisis contact information. Critical incident response procedures. Emergency accommodation and safety planning. Immediate psychological support. Family contact and coordination.

How to Access Wellbeing Support

Contact Student Services directly and confidentially. Talk to your trainer/assessor who can refer you. Use emergency contacts for crisis situations. Walk-in to Student Services during business hours. Call external 24/7 helplines (Lifeline, Beyond Blue).

All wellbeing support is confidential. You don't need to explain everything to get help. Early support prevents small problems becoming big ones.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

Support is Free

All student support services are included in your course fees. There are no additional charges for tutoring, counselling, or other support services. Don't avoid getting help because you're worried about cost.

Support is Confidential

Your personal information and support needs are handled confidentially. Information is only shared with relevant staff to provide your support. Your privacy is protected under the Privacy Act 1988. You control who knows what about your circumstances.

Early Intervention Works Best

Problems are easier to solve when caught early. Don't wait until you're failing to ask for academic help. Don't wait until you're in crisis to seek wellbeing support. The Institute wants to help you succeed – that's why these services exist.

You're Not Alone

Many students use support services – it's normal and encouraged. Asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness. Other students have faced similar challenges and succeeded with support. Staff are here specifically to help you.

Support Plans Are Flexible

Your support plan can change as your needs change. Regular reviews ensure support remains relevant. You can request additional support at any time. Adjustments can be made mid-course if circumstances change.

International Student Specific Points

All support services are available to you at no additional cost. The Institute has specific staff designated as international student contact officers. Visa implications are considered in all support planning. Cultural adjustment support helps you settle in Australia. Your family back home can be involved in support planning if you wish.

Committee Oversight

The Student Support Committee monitors all support services to ensure they're effective, accessible, and meeting student needs. This committee reports to the Executive Leadership Team and includes representation from student services, academic staff, and compliance.

Quality Monitoring

The Institute tracks support service effectiveness through student satisfaction surveys (target 90% satisfaction), completion rates for students using support (target 85% successful completion), complaint resolution times (100% within specified timeframes), and continuous improvement initiatives.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Feedback, Complaints, and Appeals

Providing Feedback

Your feedback helps improve support services. Complete student satisfaction surveys. Provide informal feedback to Student Services staff. Participate in focus groups when invited. Share suggestions for service improvements.

Making a Complaint

If you're unhappy with support services, you can complain through MITP07 Complaints and Appeals Policy. Complaints are resolved within specified timeframes. Independent review is available if you're not satisfied. Complaints lead to improvements in services.

Lodging an Appeal

If a decision adversely affects your studies, you can appeal through MITP07. Appeals are heard by independent panels. External review is available through Ombudsman services. You can have a support person attend with you.

Roles and Responsibilities

Student Services Division provides the primary point of contact for all support services, coordinates pre-training reviews and support planning, delivers training support services, manages wellbeing support referrals, handles complaints and appeals, and maintains student support records.

Trainers and Assessors identify students needing support, refer students to Student Services, implement reasonable adjustments in class, provide academic support within their expertise, and monitor student progress.

All Staff have responsibility to recognize students in distress, make appropriate referrals to Student Services, maintain confidentiality, treat all students with respect and dignity, and support diversity and inclusion.

Privacy and Confidentiality

All support information is stored securely and confidentially. Only authorized staff access your support records. Information sharing requires your consent (except in emergencies). Records are retained according to regulatory requirements. You can access your own support records at any time.

Critical Incident Management

If a critical incident occurs affecting your wellbeing, the Institute has specific procedures under MITP14 Critical Incident Policy to ensure your immediate safety, provide emergency support, contact emergency services if needed, notify your emergency contacts, and provide ongoing support and follow-up.

NEED HELP OR HAVE QUESTIONS?

Student Services Officer: 1300 244 002, academics@menzies.vic.edu.au

After Hours Crisis Support

Institute Emergency Line: [After-hours Number]

Lifeline: 13 11 14 (24/7)

Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636 (24/7)

Kids Helpline (under 25): 1800 55 1800

Mental Health Crisis: 1800 629 354

RELATED POLICIES YOU SHOULD KNOW

- MITP89 – Pre-Training Review Policy and Procedure
- MITP07 – Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- MITP83 – Reasonable Adjustment Policy and Procedure
- MITP14 – Critical Incident Policy and Procedure
- MITP53 – Fair Treatment and Equal Benefits Policy
- MITP001 – Quality Governance and Accountability Framework

All policies are available on the Menzies Institute of Technology website or from Student Services.