Student Support Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) The purpose of this policy is to provide Melbourne Polytechnic students information about the range of academic and non-academic student support available to them throughout their student journey in order to maximise their academic success and potential.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) The policy applies to all prospective and current students enrolled in courses with Melbourne Polytechnic both onshore and offshore, all Melbourne Polytechnic staff, and International third-party institutes.

Section 3 - Policy

Policy Statement

(3) Melbourne Polytechnic is committed to providing high-quality student support services that enables our students to have every opportunity to satisfactorily achieve their learning goals, by ensuring they are aware of the available support services and how to access them.

(4) Melbourne Polytechnic makes available a wide-range of student support services that caters for a diverse range of students with the intent to identify and encourage action that supports their learning needs within a safe and inclusive environment, both on-campus and online.

(5) For offshore students studying at an International third-party institute, a range of student welfare and support services are extended at the partner campus, together with selected academic support delivered in-person and/or virtually by Melbourne Polytechnic where required.

Policy Principles

(6) This policy will be guided by the following principles and standards:

a. Melbourne Polytechnic's Strategic Vision & Values;
b. ASQA standards in the support of learners;
c. TEQSA standards in student wellbeing and safety (HES Framework)
d. VRQA standards in student welfare; and the
e. National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students.

Policy Topics

Seeking Support – Information and Identification

(7) Students may seek support or access any support needs (subject to assessment) at any time throughout their student journey.

(8) The range of support services available and information on census dates will be communicated to students at the commencement of their studies through Orientation sessions, the Student Handbook and regularly through targeted email communications.

(9) Melbourne Polytechnic endeavours to identify students with support needs during the pre-enrolment stage to ensure early intervention by engaging with prospective students to understand their individual learning needs and any reasonable support that may be required.

(10) Any individual support Melbourne Polytechnic may be able to provide is dependent on the level of disclosure by the student as individual student circumstances vary and there are a range of possible support strategies that may be appropriate.

(11) Whilst Melbourne Polytechnic recognises a learner's right not to disclose their personal circumstances, we may not be able to make an accurate assessment and provide the most appropriate support if the student chooses not to provide specific details and/or appropriate supporting documentation.

(12) Where it is identified at the pre-enrolment stage that an onshore prospective student may not currently possess the determined eligibility criteria or skills to undertake their training and/or assessment, they will be referred to the Skills and Job Centre for a more comprehensive skills assessment and provided with appropriate alternative study options.

(13) Melbourne Polytechnic proactively monitors student attendance and progression throughout the duration of their course, and uses early intervention measures to support students where their progression through their course may be impeded as outlined in the Assessment (HE) Procedure and Assessment (VET and Foundation) Policy.

(14) Educators who become aware of a student who may benefit from any range of academic or non-academic support may instigate action to address these directly or by referring the student to the appropriate support unit within Melbourne Polytechnic.

Student Wellbeing

(15) Melbourne Polytechnic provides a wide-range of non-academic support services that support the wellbeing of students such as:

a. counselling and mental health support;
b. equity and access support including those who are carers;
c. orientation and social outreach activities;
d. advocacy for students who identify as Koorie, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander;
e. international student support;
f. course and career advice and planning; and
g. engagement and connection opportunities for students who identify as LGBTIQ+.

(16) Through providing a positive learning experience, Melbourne Polytechnic celebrates tolerance and values diversity and is committed to ensure equal opportunities are afforded to all students, in an environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, sexual harm, bullying and victimisation. Additional support provisions are further detailed within the:

a. Sexual Harm Prevention and Response Policy
b. Student Equal Opportunity, Discrimination and Harassment Policy; and
c. Supporting Students with Disabilities Policy

(17) Melbourne Polytechnic will treat all disclosures and complaints of crisis or critical harm sensitively, whilst prioritising confidentiality and protection from reprisal or retaliation, and encourages students experiencing harm to speak with a person that they trust about their experience. Where a student wishes to make Melbourne Polytechnic aware of their situation, they can contact the Contact Officer for Students:

a. P: (03) 9269 1305
b. E: studentsafety@melbournepolytechnic.edu.au

Academic Learning Support

(18) Melbourne Polytechnic has dedicated resources to provide academic learning support to students that require it through the identification of learner requirements, students who have been identified as at risk of not successfully completing their units of study, or at the request or instigation by students or educators such as, but not limited to:

a. learning skills; in-class, online or through one-on-one or group learning skills sessions;
b. additional study assistance through Studiosity;
c. access to learning resources both digital and in print;
d. academic integrity support; and
e. additional library and digital skills support.

(19) Special consideration may also be applied across a range of subjects for a student who has been affected by illness or other unexpected cause that has adversely affected their capacity to undertake, prepare for or complete any component of an assessment task.

Reasonable Adjustment

(20) Students with a disability, long-term medical condition or other exceptional circumstance that impacts on their ability to perform, or students who may have additional learning needs may seek reasonable adjustment/s to meet the requirements of their course.

(21) Examples of reasonable adjustments may include any of the following:

a. in-classroom support, such as notetaking or participative assistance;
b. Auslan translation;
c. the provision of course material in different formats;
d. use of adaptive technology;
e. additional time or alternate assessment tasks; and/or
f. other reasonable support that may be accommodated.

(22) All reasonable adjustments will be assessed in consultation with the student, and where approved and will include regular reviews and modification if required to ensure effectiveness of the adjustment on the students:

a. ability to achieve learning outcomes;
b. ability to participate in their course;
c. independence;
d. the effect of the adjustment on anyone else affected, including Melbourne Polytechnic staff and other students; and
e. the costs and benefits of making the adjustment.

(23) Students who do not wish to access ongoing reasonable adjustments or who may only require temporary support,

may instead seek special consideration through discussing their particular circumstances with their teaching staff member.

Support Exceptions

(24) Whilst Melbourne Polytechnic provides a wide-range of dedicated support provisions, some specific student support services are unable to be accommodated such as financial or legal support. Melbourne Polytechnic however will endeavour to provide referral to external providers within the community where appropriate.

Reporting and Compliance

(25) Melbourne Polytechnic will report de-identified information annually on the support provisions available to students as outlined in the Higher Education Provider Amendment (Support for Students Policy) Guidelines 2023.

(26) This policy will be reviewed annually for quality assurance, and to identify opportunities for improvements in providing support to students to ensure they remain appropriate and effective.

Feedback and Complaints

(27) Melbourne Polytechnic strives to maintain a high-quality and diverse range of student support services and welcomes student feedback on the effectiveness or other suggestions to ensure we continue to meet the needs of our students, or where our support services can be improved.

Section 4 - Responsibility and Accountability

(28) Students are responsible for managing their own learning journey and seeking support and advice as required.

(29) Educators shall be aware of the student support provisions available at Melbourne Polytechnic and are responsible for ensuring support options are provided to all students where they observe and/or learn that a student may benefit from additional support, referring them to the appropriate internal support unit.

(30) All Melbourne Polytechnic staff who have a student support role are responsible for the provision of effective student support services in involving the student in determining support requirements, addressing and responding to student needs, making referrals to external providers where appropriate, monitoring the effectiveness of the support provided and sharing examples of best practice.

(31) International partners are responsible for ensuring a range of welfare and student support services are extended to offshore students studying at the partner institute.

(32) This Director, Asia Academic Operations is responsible for ensuring the adequacy of student support services of offshore third-party institutes.

(33) The Manager, Library and Learning Skills is responsible for the oversight of all literacy and numeracy support, gathering and evaluating services for continuous improvement.

(34) The Manager Student Services is responsible for the oversight of all student wellbeing support, gathering and evaluating services for continuous improvement.

(35) The Executive Director People and Student Success as policy owner, is responsible for the overall management of student support services, systems and processes, across Melbourne Polytechnic, monitoring its effectiveness.

Section 5 - DEFINITIONS

(36) For the purpose of this policy the following definitions apply:

a. ASQA: means the Australian Skills Quality Authority.
b. Intervention: Strategies applied during the semester to assist students to improve academic performance such as attending academic skills support programs or joining a study group.
c. Reasonable Adjustment: A measure or action taken to assist a learner with disability or long-term medical condition take part in their education on the same basis as their peers without disability.
d. Reasonable Support: Support services provided to a student that allows them to positively engage in their studies to maximise their academic success and potential, that is proportionate to their required need within reason without placing unjustifiable hardship on Melbourne Polytechnic.
e. Special Consideration: Available for a student during the semester where they been affected by illness or other unexpected cause, which has affected their capacity to undertake, prepare for, or complete any component of an assessment.
f. TEQSA: means the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency.
g. VRQA: means the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority.

Status and Details

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Policy Owner	Cathy Frazer Executive Director People and Student Success
Policy Implementation Officer	Karen Cook Manager Student Services
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