



STUDENT COUNSELLING POLICY

Purpose

Lincoln Education Australia (LEA**) is committed to ensuring that all students have every opportunity to participate fully in their education, and vital to this is offering support for non-academic challenges that can impact students' education. Counselling services are one component of the suite of support services LEA maintains in order to uphold its duty of care towards students and assist students in succeeding in their academic activities.

This *Student Counselling Policy* outlines the principles underpinning the student counselling program at LEA. It establishes the expected standard for counselling sessions, the ways in which LEA shall facilitate student access to counselling, and the confidentiality measures that shall be in place to protect students.

**The trading name for the Lincoln Institute of Higher Education (LIHE) is Lincoln Education Australia (LEA).

POLICY

Scope

This policy applies to all staff and students at LEA.

Principles

All students studying a higher education course at LEA have the right to:

- Be treated equally and with respect, regardless of their background
- Feel safe and supported in their learning and teaching environment
- Access support services for assistance when extenuating factors affect their learning.

LEA is committed to upholding these rights both on campus and online.

Student support services shall be designed to cater to each specific student cohort and shall be responsive to changes in student needs.

LEA shall ensure that all student difficulties are taken seriously. All students who approach student support staff shall have their case considered individually, taking into account their specific context.

LEA shall ensure that students do not experience any further disadvantage due to divulging their circumstances to LEA student support staff.



As per the *Assessment Policy* and *Academic Progress Policy and Procedures*, LEA shall identify and offer support to students who are at risk of unsatisfactory progress and identify whether academic or non-academic issues are impacting the student's ability to progress through a course.

Counselling services aim to holistically address the personal wellbeing of students in order to assist them in succeeding in their education.

LEA shall ensure that student information is treated with the upmost confidentiality.

PROCEDURES

Counselling

A qualified and professional on-campus Counsellor shall be available to students within campus opening hours excluding public holidays and periods when LEA is closed.

Counselling sessions shall be:

- Free of charge for all students
- Scheduled so that they do not clash with the student's classes, where possible.
- Within reason, flexible in terms of length and frequency to meet students' changing needs
- Conducted in a professional and ethical manner.

Information for Students

As per the *Information for Students Policy*, information on counselling services, including how to access them, shall be available to students via the:

- LEA website
- Student Handbook
- Orientation Program and materials
- LMS
- Subject outlines for each subject
- Flyers and posters around campus.

Referrals

Self-Referral

Students may make an appointment with student support staff, or attend walk-in individual counselling sessions available to students within campus opening hours, excluding public holidays and periods when LEA is closed.



Referral by Staff Members

Any staff member may refer an individual student to counselling services during a one-on-one consultation with the student.

External Referral

LEA student support staff and administration staff are equipped to refer student to external counselling and support services.

Students shall be treated equally to all other students if they seek external help. This includes continuing access to the LEA counselling service.

Confidentiality

The LEA Counsellor shall ensure that student details and grievances are treated with the utmost confidentiality.

The only instance in which the Counsellor is required to communicate something revealed by the student during a counselling session is if the student:

- is at risk of attempting suicide
- Is unable to take care of themselves
- Is at risk of physically harming others.

The Counsellor shall inform students of this obligation from the outset.

Records of student counselling session details shall be securely maintained to ensure confidentiality, as per the *Data and Records Integrity Policy*.

Continual Improvement

Student counselling services shall be monitored as per 'policy implementation and monitoring' below. Reports from monitoring activities shall be used to implement improvements to the services to ensure that they are tailored to the needs of each specific student cohort.

The Academic Board shall determine which recommendations to implement for improvement of the course and develop implementation plans with clear responsibilities and reporting arrangements.

Improvements shall be made in accordance with the limits of authority defined in the *Delegations Register*. As such, the Academic Board may be required to submit improvement plans to the Corporate Governance Board for approval.

The positions and/or bodies responsible for implementing improvements shall provide a report on implementation as per the planned reporting arrangement. This report shall be

considered part of the ongoing monitoring and reporting on student counselling services at the LEA.

Policy Implementation and Monitoring

The Academic Board delegates responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this policy to the Student Experience Manager.

The Academic Board shall review all periodic reports and advice from relevant committees and staff members.

Additionally, the Academic Board shall review all relevant student complaints, concerns raised by staff members, and instances of student or staff misconduct on an ongoing basis.

Based on these monitoring activities, the Academic Board shall provide a report to the Corporate Governance Board and ensure that findings are taken into account in planning, quality assurance and improvement processes.

Compliance

All staff and students at LEA are required to comply with this policy and its procedures, and with related policies and procedures. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action.

File Number	LEA-GEN-COR-70056-D
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Contact Officer	Student Experience Manager
Legislative Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth) Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011
Supporting Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Related Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability Support Policy Information for Students Policy and Procedures International Students Services Procedures Orientation Program Policy and Procedures Student Support, Wellbeing and Safety Policy and Procedures Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Policy and Procedures Student Learning Support Policy and Procedures
Superseded Documents	
Effective Date	1 January 2022
Next Review	3 years from the effective date

Definitions

Academic Board: Governing body responsible for academic matters, including teaching and learning, course approval, workforce planning, academic staff appointments, research and professional development, academic policies and procedures, overseeing student grievances and appeals processes.



Academic staff: Staff employed at LEA in a learning and teaching or research capacity.

‘At risk’ student: Student who is identified as being at risk of failing a subject and therefore at risk of satisfactory progress through a course of study; or a student who fails a core or compulsory subject or fails 50% or more of the credit points in a study period, and are thus ‘at risk’ of unsatisfactory progress.

Corporate Governance Board: Governing body responsible for oversight of all higher education operations, including the ongoing viability of LEA and the quality of its higher education delivery. The Corporate Governance Board guides Management and delegates responsibility for academic matters to the Academic Board.

Counselling services: Support services offered by LEA to any student experiencing personal problems that needs or requests professional help and advice.

Student support services: Non-academic support services. A Student Experience Officer can refer students to counsellors, general practitioners, and other health and wellbeing services.

Review Schedule

This policy shall be reviewed by the Academic Board every three years.

Version History			
Version number:	Approved by:	Approval Date:	Revision Notes:
1.0	Academic Board	17/12/2020	New policy
1.1	Academic Board	22/02/2023	TEQSA and CRICOS requirements incorporated