

Institution	Universal Higher Education (UHE)
Policy name	UHE Support for Students Framework
Policy Governance	Academic Board

1. Introduction

The Higher Education Support Amendment (Response to the Australian Universities Accord Interim Report) Act 2023 amends the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA) requiring all higher education providers (providers) to have, comply with and report on a policy to support students to successfully complete units of study (subjects) in which they are enrolled.

Three requirements commenced on 1 January 2024 and Universal Higher Education (UHE) was, and continues to be, in full compliance. The three standard requirements are that:

1. Providers must have a Support for Students Policy that deals with the support made available to the provider's students to assist them to successfully complete the units of study (subjects) in which they are enrolled.
2. Provider's Support for Students Policy must include information on:
 - a. The provider's processes for identifying students that are at risk of not successfully completing their units of study, and
 - b. The supports available from or on behalf of the provider to assist students to successfully complete the units of study (subject) in which they are enrolled.
3. The provider must comply with its Support for Students Policy.

This Support for Students Framework has been designed to be read and applied alongside the UHE Support for Students Policy.

The overall intents of this Framework are to:

1. Exceed the standard requirements for Support for Students and thus create an environment of educational excellence and student success.
2. Build-upon the Support for Students Policy as the base document to elaborate and further inform operational implementation, management and academic governance.
3. Detail the alignment of the Support for Students Policy with the nuanced cohort-specific context of UHE students and staff. This includes specifically outlining supports to international students, in alignment with the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, detailed in this Framework as Annexure 1.

2. Scope

This framework applies to all actions and staffing dedicated to the support of students in the promotion of their academic success. In the context of Academic Governance, the framework will be used to design and deliver reports to Academic Board.

3. Executive Summary

The key elements of the UHE Support for Students Framework are as follows:

Stages in Student Lifecycle	Risks	Aims	Primary Mitigations
Pre-study: Student attraction, application and enrolment	<p>That applicants are not genuine students.</p> <p>That applicants do not have the required English levels and/or other competencies to academically succeed.</p>	That UHE admits genuine students with the threshold English requirements and other academic competencies required to commence with the necessary precursors to success.	<p>Rigorous screening of applications.</p> <p>Use of quality agents.</p> <p>Use of IELTS and other tools / assessments.</p>
Early study: First Year Experience	<p>That students do not feel a sense of belonging and/or do not make connections with other students.</p> <p>That students do not have a sense of overall wellbeing.</p> <p>That students do not have a sense of efficacy as a higher education student.</p> <p>That student do not attend, fully participate and engage in classes and study.</p>	That UHE supports a strong transition into higher education (and into postgraduate study) so that students are supported to succeed and continue through and beyond their first year into their second.	<p>Provide robust student orientation, including clear communication of student supports.</p> <p>Create a vibrant campus of social activities.</p> <p>Design interactive, engaging pedagogy.</p> <p>Take and require attendance and deliver personalised follow-up with students.</p> <p>Identify students at-risk through early, evidence/data-based approaches.</p> <p>Implement targeted intervention programs such as academic tutoring, mentoring, and study skill workshops tailored to address specific needs identified among at-risk students.</p> <p>Conduct regular follow-ups on at-risk students to monitor their progress, address any challenges they may be facing, and provide support.</p>
Mid study	<p>That previously engaged students dis-engage.</p> <p>That students experience life matters (family, finance, work) which interfere with study success.</p> <p>That students become at-risk.</p>	That UHE delivers a student-centered environment of educational success so that students successfully progress throughout their studies and graduate.	<p>Deliver industry engagement and networking.</p> <p>Provide (and communicate) a robust suite of student supports.</p> <p>Identify students at-risk through timely, evidence/data-based approaches. As well as provide further support for students who</p>

			<p>have failed the same subject twice or have had consecutive unsatisfactory course progressions two semesters in a row..</p> <p>UHE defines unsatisfactory academic progress as students not passing 50% of the subjects enrolled in a given semester; failing the same subject twice (multi-fail) or students not able to complete their course within the maximum period of study defined by UHE's Academic Board.</p> <p>Communicate with students on a personalised basis. As well as continuous monitoring of students' progress throughout their course duration.</p> <p>Deliver Intervention Plans to at-risk students.</p> <p>Support students with their academic, personal, social, and emotional well-being, ensuring students feel supported throughout their study.</p>
Post study	That graduates do not successfully transition into their next steps and achieve their success ambitions.	That UHE students are actively supported in the transition beyond UHE, including into careers or further study.	<p>Provide work integrated learning and/or capstone projects.</p> <p>Offer transition support for students nearing the completion of their studies, assisting them in planning their next steps.</p> <p>Provide career coaching and supports.</p> <p>Connect students with alumni networks and resources to facilitate ongoing support and networking opportunities beyond graduation.</p>

Principles

Implementation and continuous improvement of Universal Higher Education (UHE) Support for Students is consistently grounded on the following principles.

UHE's support for student's framework and mechanisms will enable the provider to:

1. Put students first, recognising that student centricity and support are key features of UHE's distinctive approach to education.
2. Support students to develop self-agency and be self-initiated learners, taking reasonable levels of responsibility for their student participation, engagement and success.
3. Commit to providing an outstanding experience and success outcomes to international students who have chosen Australia as the destination to host their studies.
4. Deliver a streamlined and consistent step-by-step personalised approach to tracking student progress, using data to identify students who are at-risk, transparently promoting a broad-based suite of supports to students and applying interventions when required.
5. Prioritise supports enabling educational success while also recognising students as complex humans with interacting support needs for overall life success and wellbeing.
6. Apply the established scholarship of transition pedagogy, recognising that student success is predicated on a fostered sense of belonging and that students require scaffolded support as they enter, move-through and bridge from higher education into careers, higher degrees or other endeavours.
7. Provide personalised supports to every UHE student to enable success.
8. Nuance supports to the particular context of UHE, applying expertise in supports which are most effective for UHE student cohorts.
9. Widen participation through an enacted commitment to championing student diversity, equity and social inclusion / justice.
10. Continuously monitor, evaluate and improve supports for students.

4. Risks

This Student Support Framework aligns with the following risks (and the associated mitigations) formally documented on the UHE Risk Register:

1. The risk of failure to provide effective student support, including the failure to properly and consistently conduct student intervention and documentation.
2. The risk regarding major swings in the rate of UHE student progress (i.e. high / low completions), confounded by multiple levels of English within a class serving as a challenge to student progress.
3. The risk of high student attrition rates.
4. The risk that students admitted to degrees may not be equipped to succeed, in regard to level of academic preparation, learning skills and proficiency in English, and the associated risk that ill-prepared students are not knowingly admitted.
5. In the context of at-risk students, the UHE risk is that students are not fully made aware of the services offered and/or that provided services are not delivered to the required standards.
6. The risk of failure to ensure the health and safety of students and student welfare.
7. The risk associated with death or serious injury to a student as a result of organisational activities onshore or offshore.
8. The risk of poor levels of student attendance.
9. The risk regarding student load (high / low).

10. The risk of high student / low staff ratios.
11. The risk of low levels of student satisfaction.
12. Risks related to academic integrity, such as cheating, plagiarism, harassment and misconduct.
13. The risk of failure to build a cohesive workplace culture that is committed to the strategic and operational objectives, and lack of intercultural awareness.
14. The risk of insufficient access to and inclusion of disabled students.
15. The national risk of changes to government policy for student support that reduces student numbers (and associated educational supports) domestically and/or internationally.

The Student Support measures outlined through this Framework serve as primary mitigation against these risks. A consistent approach to providing robust supports to all UHE students, with heightened supports provided to those students who are identified as being at-risk will ensure that there is heightened student / graduate success.

5. Reasons Why Students May Require Additional Supports

A student may require additional academic support due to a number of factors, such as:

- Medical illness, injury, psychological condition or disability;
- Family or carer responsibilities;
- Behaviour which is consistently disruptive, volatile or otherwise in breach of UHE Values and code of conduct and is considered to be academic misconduct;
- English language proficiency;
- Concerns regarding academic capacity or achievement which might be reflected by:
- Provisional enrolment or pattern of deferral;
- Change to a new field of study that may challenge previously successful approaches to learning;
 - Failure of 50% or more of credit points attempted in the semester;
 - Failure to attend compulsory teaching and assessment components;
 - Failure to complete mandated assessment element or practicum;
 - Unsatisfactory attendance record and/or;
 - Minimal class participation/engagement.

6. UHE STUDENT SUPPORTS

6.1 Pre-Study (Including Arriving at UHE)

1. International Student Arrival Support

UHE will provide support to students on their first arrival to Australia. Under this service, UHE will provide the following.

- a) Airport pickup and temporary accommodation support

UHE will offer airport pick up of students at the time of their arrival.

- b) Familiarization with Australian environment

UHE will provide students with familiarization support to understand Australian culture, city life and way of living. These include the provision by UHE information booklets and website. UHE will also

organise city tours and support students to travel to places to build familiarity and comfort with the local environment.

Process

1. For international students arriving in Melbourne for study at UHE, students are able to register for a transport service that will pick up from the airport and take students to their accommodation upon arrival. This service will incur a charge as defined by the provider and be communicated to the students prior to arrival.
2. UHE will use the support of external providers for this service.
3. Service will be bookable through the service provider/s identified.
4. UHE will provide students with public transport information. This information will also be available during student orientations.

2. Student Orientation Plan

UHE will provide a comprehensive orientation to all commencing students at the beginning of each semester. In orientation, UHE will provide the following.

a) Orientation to the Institute

Through orientation, all students will build familiarity and comfort (establishing the foundations of belongingness) with the institute, its facilities and a principle/value-based introduction to learning and teaching approaches, introduction to teaching and non-teaching staff, key elements of course structure and an opportunity to interact with and build the foundations of friendship with fellow enrolling students.

Process

1. A program schedule and itinerary which contains Orientation activities, schedules and student support services will be communicated to the students through email and corresponding links for internal and external support to settle-in. An information package will be sent to all students at the student journey phase of course offers and/or enrolment. This will be done through email and through agents' networks.
2. Students will also be informed and guided regarding how to enrol and how to choose course subjects for enrolment.
3. UHE Academic staff will support students throughout this process by presenting key details about the course and structures, and by offering personalised help and guidance.
4. Student attendance will be monitored and recorded in order to maximise participation, engagement and outcomes. Students will be fully informed, in-advance that attendance is mandatory.

6.2 Early Study: First Year Experience

Indicators of At-Risk Students

UHE will use a suite of indicators to identify students or cohorts at risk, and to inform decisions about the required support. Indicators include:

Indicators applicable to commencing students:

- English Language and Mathematics Assessment during Orientation week;
- Demographic data collected at admission;
- Self-reporting of learning needs at application;
- Outcomes of early assessment tasks; Ongoing support throughout the semester

6.3 Individualised Student Intervention and Support Plan

Academic Program Coordinators and Subject Coordinators will include an early assessment component or other diagnostic task in all first-year undergraduate subjects. Program Coordinators will identify students who may benefit from additional support based on performance in assessment or other diagnostic tasks. These students will be contacted by the Program Coordinator, a member of the teaching staff for the subject, or, at the request of teaching staff, a relevant professional staff member to ensure they are aware of support services they may find useful to access.

By week five of semester one, Subject and/or Program Coordinators will have identified commencing students at risk of failing the subject and invite each respective student by email to an informal meeting to agree on an Individualised Student Intervention and Support Plan. The support program will be noted in the student management system.

By week 9 of the semester one, Subject and /or Program Coordinators will have monitored subject progression rates for all subjects and provided support, including but not limited to additional tutorials, exam workshops and exam revision, as well as kept records of student attendance and closed-the-loop with follow-up engagement where necessary.

7. Managing Students at Risk

7.1 At the End of First Year

In accordance with the Monitoring Course Progress Attendance and Course Duration Policy, students identified as at-risk of progressing and thus moving towards probation at the end of their first year (50% or more fail grades from the total enrolled subjects) will be notified that they are at-risk of unsatisfactory academic progress and urged to participate in opportunities designed to improve their academic performance.

To ensure student success and retention, students are placed on academic intervention if they:

- fail 50% or more of the enrolled subjects (unsatisfactory course progress) during the semester under consideration and/or
- are awarded a failing grade in a subject which they have previously failed in their current or any other course of study at UHE.
- exceed the maximum time limit for completion of an award / course.

7.2 Mid Study

Indicators of At-Risk Students

UHE will use a suite of indicators to identify students or cohorts at risk, and to inform decisions about the required support. Indicators include:

- attendance in class;
 - use of LMS,
 - assessment results and/or,
 - use of support services
- Throughout their academic journey each Program Coordinator will continuously monitor each student's progress and performance, identifying any signs of student distress or disengagement or escalating student needs. Students will be provided support, as appropriate, with such approaches as additional tutorials, exam workshops and exam revision. Program Coordinators will work closely with academic teaching staff to identify academic challenges faced by at-risk students and will implement targeted interventions within the curriculum and / or teaching methods.

7.3 Post Study

Transition support is provided for students nearing completion of their studies, where assistance is requested, required and/or would be advantageous for planning student / graduate next steps (e.g. employment, further study). To ensure a smooth transition to the workforce students and/or graduates are provided with:

- Career counseling and guidance to help explore career options, develop job search skills, and prepare for the transition process.
- Workshops, master classes (online and face-to-face) and resource toolkits on employability and securing, sustaining a progressing through graduate careers.
- Connection with alumni networks and resources to facilitate ongoing support and networking opportunities beyond graduation.

Continuous improvement of employability and career transition approaches (for future cohorts) will be managed through seeking feedback from students and graduates about their academic experience and the support they received, and closing-the-loop on refinement.

Annexure 1

Response in Context of National Code

Standard 6 of the ESOS National Code relates to support of international students.

National Code Standard	UHE Compliance Statement	UHE Student Service Plan item
6.1 The registered provider must support the overseas student in adjusting to study and life in Australia by giving the overseas student information on or access to an age and culturally appropriate orientation program that provides information about:	Details of support provided to students is given in orientation and student handbook.	Student Service Plan will provide various support to overseas students
6.1.1 Support services available to assist overseas students to help them adjust to study and life in Australia	Welfare and counselling support including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adjusting to living in a new culture, • coping with relationship and family issues, • dealing with homesickness, stress or depression, • maintaining motivation. • accommodation assistance 	Item 5 of the plan - Student Engagement and Welfare Item 6 of the plan - Counselling Support
6.1.2 English language and study assistance programs	English department	Item 3 of the plan - English Language and Academic Skill support
6.1.3 Any relevant legal services	Included within welfare counselling function	Item 6 of the plan - Counselling Support
6.1.4 Emergency and health services	UHE has empanelled an insurance company for provision of OSHC.	Item 8 of the plan - Emergency and evacuation

National Code Standard	UHE Compliance Statement	UHE Student Service Plan item
	Lists of emergency medical centres and ambulances services and contact numbers will be made available during orientation.	
6.1.5 The registered provider's facilities and resources	UHE maintains all facilities in a manner consistent with 9B Conditions.	Item 9 of the plan – IT and Other support
6.1.6 Complaints and appeals processes as outlined in Standard 10 (Complaints and appeals)	Student Handbook covers details on this and is presented during orientation.	Overall Plan and Item 2 of the plan – Student Orientation
6.1.7 Requirements for course attendance and progress, as appropriate	Student Handbook covers details on this and is presented during orientation	Overall Plan
6.1.8 The support services available to assist students with general or personal circumstances that are adversely affecting their education in	<p>On academic matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first points of contact will be academic staff who will be available during consulting hours and deal with help pertaining to their subjects/ domain. • Teaching assistants and learning advisors will be available in the context of the study area to provide additional coaching to students experiencing difficulties. <p>On non-study related matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First point of contact will be Student Service Officers who aim to address concerns in a compassionate manner – these may be related to leave requirements, or to extension of submission of deadlines or personal issues that require compassionate treatment to help them with coping with education. 	<p>Item 3 of the plan - English Language and Academic Skill support</p> <p>Item 5 of the plan - Student welfare and Engagement</p>

National Code Standard	UHE Compliance Statement	UHE Student Service Plan item
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the issue is beyond the scope of the student service officer the matter will be referred to the HE coordinator or Welfare officer (counsellor) for further guidance and help to students. 	Item 6 of the plan - counselling Services
6.1.9 Services students can access for information on their employment rights and conditions, and how to resolve workplace issues, such as through the Fair Work Ombudsman.	<p>Details of Workplace rights and resolving issues are addressed in the orientation.</p> <p>These queries will be addressed by the Student Services Officer;</p> <p>Emails regarding employment rights and conditions, and how to resolve workplace issues, such as through the Fair Work Ombudsman.</p>	Item 7 of the plan – Career Support Services
6.2 The registered provider must give relevant information or provide referrals as appropriate to overseas students who request assistance in relation to the services and programs set out in Standard 6.1, at no additional cost to the overseas student.	<p>All referral services will be provided free of charge.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodation assistance Legal referrals psychological counselling referrals 	Overall Plan
6.3 The registered provider must offer reasonable support to overseas students to enable them to achieve expected learning outcomes regardless of the overseas student’s place of study or the mode of study of the course, at no additional cost to the overseas student.	All referral services will be provided as per the plan.	Overall Plan

National Code Standard	UHE Compliance Statement	UHE Student Service Plan item
6.4 The registered provider must facilitate access to learning support services consistent with the requirements of the course, mode of study and the learning needs of overseas student cohorts, including having and implementing documented processes for supporting and maintaining contact with overseas students undertaking online or distance units of study.	All referral services will be provided as per the plan.	Overall Plan
6.5 The registered provider must designate a member or members of its staff to be the official point of contact for overseas students. The Student Contact Officer or officers must have access to up-to-date details of the registered provider's support services.	The Student Service Officers are the nominated contacts.	Overall Plan
6.6 The registered provider must have sufficient student support personnel to meet the needs of the overseas students enrolled with the registered provider.	All referral services will be provided as per the plan.	Overall Plan
6.7 The registered provider must ensure its staff members who interact directly with overseas students are aware of the registered provider's obligations under the ESOS framework and the potential implications for overseas students arising from the exercise of these obligations.	The Students Services who interact directly with overseas students recruited by UHE will have knowledge of the ESOS ACT and the National code of Practice (2018). Ongoing professional development on National code are scheduled for the staff members.	Overall Plan
6.8 The registered provider must have and implement a documented	UHE has a documented Critical Incident Policy and procedure along with the	Critical Incident Policy

National Code Standard	UHE Compliance Statement	UHE Student Service Plan item
<p>policy and process for managing critical incidents that could affect the overseas student's ability to undertake or complete a course, such as but not limited to incidents that may cause physical or psychological harm. The registered provider must maintain a written record of any critical incident and remedial action taken by the registered provider for at least two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student.</p>	<p>designated responsible members for implementation of the policy.</p> <p>This policy is discussed during the student orientation and staff induction.</p>	
<p>6.9.1 Take all reasonable steps to provide a safe environment on campus and advise overseas students and staff on actions they can take to enhance their personal security and safety.</p>	<p>UHE has a Health and safety policy to ensure the campus is a safe environment for everyone on campus. The orientation advises students on actions they can take for their personal safety and security. This information is also included in the student handbook.</p>	<p>Health and Safety Policy</p>
<p>6.9.2 Provide information to overseas students about how to seek assistance for and report an incident that significantly impacts on their wellbeing, including critical incidents</p>	<p>The reporting critical incidents are addressed in the orientation. This information is also included in the student handbook.</p>	<p>Critical Incident Policy</p>
<p>6.9.3 Provide overseas students with or refer them to (including electronically) general information on safety and awareness relevant to life in Australia.</p>	<p>The information is provided in the Orientation and the Student Handbook.</p>	<p>Student Handbook</p>