

# Learning Environment, Student Life and Support Policy

<b>Policy Name</b>	Learning Environment, Student Life and Support Policy
<b>Policy number</b>	SSP010
<b>Date approved</b>	4/2/15
<b>Approving body</b>	The Academic Board (Senatus)
<b>Responsible officer</b>	The Executive Director
<b>Implementation officer</b>	The Head of School Head of Administration
<b>Next review date</b>	
<b>Linked policies</b>	Disability Policy Discrimination Bullying & Harassment Policy Student Appeals Policy Student Grievance Policy Academic and Non-Academic Matters
<b>Linked forms</b>	

## Purpose of this Policy

The Cairnmillar Institute (the Institute) aims to provide a supportive learning environment and to provide an optimal education for emerging professionals. The Institute provides educational and support services to assist students with the transition into and throughout their enrolment, as well as services to help students overcome difficulties and barriers associated with coming to and staying in their chosen course.

## Scope

### Facilities

1. Facilities, whether physical or virtual, are fit for their educational purpose and accommodate the numbers and educational activities of the students and staff that use them.
2. Secure access to electronic information and communication is available continuously to students and staff.
3. The learning environment supports academic and social interactions among students and staff outside of formal teaching.

## **Diversity and Equity**

1. Institutional policies, practices and approaches to teaching and learning are designed to accommodate student diversity, including the under-representation and/or disadvantage for identified groups, and create equal opportunities for academic success regardless of students' backgrounds.
2. Specific consideration is given to the recruitment, admission, participation and completion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
3. Participation, progress, and completion by identified student subgroups are monitored and the findings are used to inform admission policies and improvement of teaching, learning and support strategies for those subgroups.

## **Student Grievances and Complaints**

1. Students and staff have access to mechanisms to address grievances about any aspect of their experience with the higher education provider, its agents or related parties.
2. There are policies and processes for the timely handling of formal complaints and appeals against academic and administrative decisions, and these are applied consistently, fairly and without reprisal.
3. Institutional complaints-handling and appeals processes include provision for advocacy and support for the complainant or appellant.
4. Decisions about complaints and appeals are recorded and the student concerned is informed in writing of the outcome and the reasons.
5. If a complaint or appeal is upheld, any action required is initiated promptly.

## **Wellbeing and Safety**

1. All students are advised of the actions they can take, the staff they may contact, and the support services available if their personal circumstances are having an adverse effect on their education.
2. The nature and extent of support services that are available for students are informed by the needs of student cohorts, including mental health and wellbeing needs.
3. Timely, current advice on access to personal support services is available, including for access to emergency services, health services, counselling, financial and legal advice, advocacy, and accommodation and welfare services.

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 and off campus and online.
5. There is a critical incident policy together with readily accessible procedures to cover the immediate action to be taken in the event of a critical incident and any follow up required.

## Student Life and Support

The Institute campuses include library facilities, access to cafes and food outlets, 24-hour access to the on-line learning management system MOODLE, a computer laboratory, twenty-four hour computer access, on-site IT support, a psychology test library, student clinics and counselling support services. The Camberwell and City campuses have a strong presence in the community and are accessible by public transport.

## Support services available

Support services include:

- **Careers and employment advice:** This advice is available for course coordinators.
- **Counselling and personal development:** A part-time student counsellor and support person is available on an “as needs” basis. Individual counselling is also outsourced on an “as needs” basis to either a consultant in one of the Institute Clinics or else to a private provider. All sessions are private and confidential between the student and the consultant.
- **Disability support:** This is provided on application. Students with disabilities are encouraged to refer to the Student Disability Policy on MOODLE.
- **Financial assistance:** As the Institute is a not-for-profit organisation, financial assistance is limited. However, the School offers a limited number of scholarships. Students may also apply to the Academic Register for a payment plan, if fees cannot be on FEE-HELP.
- **Medical centres:** Students are expected to have their own medical practitioner. However, one can be recommended, if the student requests.
- **Study skills assistance:** Our Language and Learning Adviser and the Librarian help students develop their academic skills such as writing essays and reports or preparing for exams. Students may drop in at any time to see the librarian; appointments can be made at reception. Free online based workshops, seminars and study resources are provided also.
- **International student support:** This is provided directly by the Academic Registrar who is highly experienced in international student matters.
- **Chaplaincy:** The Institute does not have religious leaders on site. However, counselling staff may be the first person to consult with advice about how to find a chaplain, imam, or rabbi or other religious leader suited to the student.
- **Legal services:** If students have any legal concerns, they are referred to Victoria Legal Aid

[www.legalaid.vic.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au)

350 Queen St.  
Melbourne VIC  
(03) 9269 0234

34 Dandenong Rd  
Frankston VIC  
(03) 9784 5222

Or the

Law Institute of Victoria  
[www.liv.asn.au](http://www.liv.asn.au)

470 Bourke St  
Melbourne VIC  
(03) 9607 9311

- **Student advocacy and representation:** Students are invited to participate in the governance of the School. Representation is actively sought from students for membership of the Academic Board (Senatus), and The Cairnmillar Institute Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). Informal advocacy can be made directly to course coordinators at any time, and to the Head of School.