

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

<b>Approved</b>	Academic Board
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<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Academic Registrar
<b>Author / Role</b>	D Hall (Quality Officer) D Speed (Dean)
<b>Related Documents</b>	Anti-Discrimination Policy Appeals Procedures Code of Conduct Critical Incident Policy and Procedures Disability Policy Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy Staff Grievance Policy and Procedures Student Grievance Policy and Procedures Record-Keeping Policy Student Support and Welfare Policy Privacy Policy Workplace Policy
<b>Higher Education Standards (2021)</b>	2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 7.2
<b>National Code (2018)</b>	6.1.1, 6.1.3, 6.1.4, 6.1.6, 6.1.9, 6.2, 6.9.1, 6.9.2, 6.9.3

### 1. PREAMBLE

#### 1.1 Purpose

This policy has been developed to address matters related to the health and wellbeing of students in particular and staff in general. Health and wellbeing are understood in the broadest possible sense. The policy aims to:

- promote an institution-wide environment that supports the health and wellbeing of all students and staff;
- establish guidelines for promoting and enhancing health and wellbeing among students and staff;
- detail appropriate strategies for responding to issues related to health and wellbeing when they arise.

#### 1.2 Scope

This policy applies to:

- all students currently enrolled by the SCD through all its Member Institutions;
- all staff of the SCD, its Schools, and its Member Institutions;
- all visitors, professional associates, partners, and other connections, where matters of SCD student or staff welfare are involved.

#### 1.3 Communication of Policy

- This policy will be made available on the SCD website with links to it on Member Institution websites and in hard copy as required.
- Attention will be drawn to this policy during orientation of students and induction of staff.

#### 1.4 Statutory Obligations

- As a higher education provider in Australia, Sydney College of Divinity is required under the *Higher Education Standards* (2015) to maintain a learning environment that supports student safety and wellbeing (2.3), including the provision of information and advice about support services and actions available in adverse or emergency circumstances. The *Higher Education Standards* also require: opportunities for student interaction

outside of teaching (2.1), support of diversity and equality (2.2), provision of information regarding health care, including a list of relevant contacts (7.2).

- The *Disability Standards for Education* (2005) require education providers to:
  - consult to assess the impact of disability on a student;
  - make reasonable adjustments to support the student's participation in education;
  - eliminate discrimination, including harassment and victimisation.
- The *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students* (2018) requires providers to offer adequate support services to assist students to adjust to study and life in Australia (6.1.1, 6.2, 6.9.3); access health care (6.1.4, 6.2), legal advice (6.1.3, 6.2), and the complaints process (6.1.6, 6.2); and understanding of their employment rights (6.1.9, 6.2), how to be safe (6.9.1), and how to respond to critical incidents (6.1.4, 6.2, 6.9.2).
- Health and wellbeing concerns might also relate to the requirements of the *Workplace Health and Safety Act* (2011), as well as the various anti-discrimination acts.

### 1.5. Principles

- SCD understands that health and wellbeing encompasses physical, mental, emotional, social, relational, spiritual, educational, developmental, identity, and moral concerns.
- SCD understands Christian faith and spiritual life as positive contributors to overall health and wellbeing. They do not, however, prevent problems of health and wellbeing from occurring. Similarly, faith, prayer and spiritual support have a role to play in the management of health and wellbeing, but do not exclude recourse to medical and psychological intervention and management strategies.
- SCD acknowledges that levels of wellbeing can impact a student's ability to study and progress through a course and a staff member's ability to work efficiently and productively.
- SCD sees as part of its provider responsibilities, the development of an environment that supports and encourages student and staff wellbeing in all its aspects.
- SCD sees its primary duty of care to whole body of students and staff, with a view to ensuring its organisational goals are achieved.
- SCD sees as part of its duty of pastoral care the identification, monitoring, and support of individuals experiencing concerns related to health and wellbeing.
- Support for individuals is based on an affirmation of their value and integrity as a person and a desire to help them achieve their best, personally, professionally and academically, as part of their overall Christian life and service.
- Support for individuals is given as far as possible within the capacities of the College but does not take precedence over the welfare of the whole body of students and staff.
- Individuals are to be referred for specialist care where the support needed by the individual cannot be provided by college personnel.

### 1.6 Definitions

- *Health* refers to a person's capacity to function normally (physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially, spiritually). This includes the absence of illness, infirmity, injury or disability, as well as practices that promote normal functioning.
- *Well-being* includes health as defined above but also extends to such things as feelings of happiness and satisfaction, successful management of stress, a sense of purpose in life, the ability to achieve goals, and self-image and confidence. Wellbeing can be influenced by a wide range of factors including quality relationships, diet, financial security, leisure pursuits, a sense of belonging, self-esteem, optimism, and spiritual beliefs.
- *Health and wellbeing* refers to the entire range of possibilities suggested by the definitions above.
- *Health and wellbeing concern* refers to anything related to health and wellbeing that is being experienced by a member of staff or a student and for which assistance might be needed.
- *Individual* refers to the person who is experiencing a health and wellbeing concern, and requires some form of support.
- *Welfare Officer* refers to the member of staff responsible for dealing with health and wellbeing concerns among students and staff. The actual title of the Welfare Officer may vary among the teaching bodies and may also be different for students and staff.

## **2. POLICY**

### **2.1 SCD Environment**

As part of its overall commitment to promoting health and wellbeing among students and staff, the College commits to:

- maintaining an institution-wide environment that complies with all required health standards, encourages healthy activities, and prevents, as far as possible, conditions that may lead to ill-health or threats to the wellbeing of students and staff;
- fulfilling all aspects of its Workplace Health and Safety obligations;
- fulfilling all aspects of its diversity, inclusiveness, harassment, and code of conduct policies;
- making necessary provision for students and staff with disability as set out in the Disability Policy;
- fostering an institution-wide culture of respect, encouragement and support for all students and staff regardless of medical background, health history, or current state of health and wellbeing;
- recognising that issues of background and identity can create particular types of health and wellbeing concerns;
- providing adequate resources for residential students to receive on-site support and assistance outside of office hours;
- providing avenues of support for non-residential students to access as needed;
- providing sufficient online and face-to-face resources to meet the general health and wellbeing needs of students and staff;
- providing emergency support procedures when needed;
- encouraging staff and students to self-disclose and seek help for health and wellbeing concerns;
- upholding proper standards of confidentiality;
- establishing and maintaining positive relationships among students and staff;
- establishing and maintaining positive relationships among the wider SCD community, including families, churches, and health care professionals;
- developing curricula and approaches to class delivery that encourage student engagement and satisfaction with the learning process;
- supporting integration of students and staff into College life in a way that encourages formation of good relationships with peers, as well as developing a sense of identification with the College and its Schools and Member Institutions.

### **2.2 Health and Wellbeing Strategies**

#### *2.2.1 Health and Wellbeing Information*

Information relevant to health and wellbeing will be provided and regularly updated:

- in digital form on the SCD website and on the websites of its Member Institutions;
- in paper form in reception areas, libraries, student common areas, residential buildings, and other appropriate locations.

#### *2.2.2 Health and Well-being Promotion*

SCD and its Member Institutions will seek to promote health and wellbeing of students and staff by:

- running appropriate information and/or training sessions (e.g. seminars, workshops) for students and staff, either face-to-face or online;
- providing relevant professional development to staff;
- encouraging students and staff to participate in activities and practices that support good health and wellbeing, and providing or organising such activities as possible;
- making provision for appropriate types of recreational activity as possible.

#### *2.2.3 Student Support*

##### *Pre-enrolment*

- SCD and its Member Institution administration will collect from students applying for admission, as part of the application process, any relevant health-related information, including relevant medical or psychological evaluations.
- The application and enrolment process will provide adequate opportunity for self-disclosure of any health and wellbeing concerns.

- Students will be given opportunity to discuss health and wellbeing concerns during pre-enrolment interviews.

#### *Orientation*

- SCD and its Member Institutions will provide all necessary information related to health and wellbeing during orientation including relevant student services and contact details.
- SCD and its Member Institutions will provide specific health and wellbeing sessions as part of orientation.
- SCD and its Member Institutions will ensure that student orientation includes activities that enable students to form connections with peers and established students. These might include group sessions, meals, leisure activities, or entertainment.

#### *First-semester check*

- At the end of a student's first teaching period, SCD and its Member Institutions will provide opportunities for assessing the student's transition into the life of the college and for the student to raise any health or wellbeing concerns. These might include individual interviews or group sessions with staff, peer-to-peer discussion, or meetings with senior students.

#### *Progress through study*

- SCD and its Member Institutions will provide adequate regular opportunities for students to raise health and wellbeing concerns or for others to monitor their levels of health and wellbeing. These opportunities might include individual meetings with a mentor or year supervisor, year group meetings, or prayer groups, as appropriate.
- SCD and its Member Institutions will engage in data collection aimed at measuring levels of student satisfaction (with self and study).

#### *Transition from study*

- Prior to a student's graduation, SCD and its Member Institutions will provide opportunities for the student to reflect on his or her student experience and discuss any concerns related to post-study life. These opportunities might include individual interviews with staff, year group sessions, small group sessions, surveys, peer-to-peer discussion.

### *2.2.4 Staff Support*

#### *Staff employment and induction*

- SCD and its Member Institutions will not regard health and wellbeing concerns in themselves as grounds for disqualifying a person from employment but will give adequate opportunity for prospective employees to demonstrate their capacity to work.
- Employees will be expected to provide all relevant information prior to their commencement or work.
- SCD and its Member Institutions will provide adequate opportunities for connection with other staff members.
- SCD and Member Institutions will provide adequate opportunities for employees to discuss health and wellbeing concerns.

#### *Staff development*

- Up-to-date information related to health and wellbeing, including relevant contacts, will be available to all staff. This information will be available through the SCD and Member Institution websites, staff computer network, and on-site in hard copy.
- Staff will be given periodic information sessions to assist with management of their own health and wellbeing.
- Staff will be given periodic training sessions related to supporting students with health and wellbeing concerns.

### *2.2.5 Health and wellbeing services*

- SCD or its Member Institutions will keep and make available an up-to-date list of contacts available to provide support for student and staff dealing with health and wellbeing concerns.
- SCD and Member Institutions will make available suitable spaces for the administration of first aid, for rest and recovery due to illness, injury or feeling unwell, and for contact of appropriate support persons. If medical personnel are not available on-site, a designated first aid officer will provide support.

- SCD or its Member Institutions will, where possible, engage the services of a medical professional on-site, to provide opportunities for immediate medical assessment.
- SCD or its Member Institutions will, where possible, provide the services of a pastoral counsellor on-site to provide opportunities to discuss matters of personal health and wellbeing, in confidence if relevant.

## 2.3 Health and Wellbeing Management

### 2.3.1 Identifying a Problem

- Staff will take note of any indicators that suggest the presence of a health or wellbeing concern (for a student or fellow staff member). Indicators might include uncharacteristic behaviour, signs of fatigue or physical duress, or signs of ill-health.
- Staff will take note of whether such indicators are isolated, short-term, or continuing, as this might suggest something about the extent and severity of the problem.

### 2.3.2 Reporting a Problem

- SCD encourages students or staff who are aware of having a health and wellbeing concern to disclose that concern to an appropriate person.
- SCD encourages students or staff who are concerned for the welfare of a fellow student or staff member to report that concern to an appropriate person.
- Staff who are concerned for the welfare of a student should report that concern to the relevant student Welfare Officer.

### 2.3.3 Intervention

Management of health and wellbeing might involve four types of intervention:

- *Informal intervention*, where a staff member or peer might speak to an individual experiencing a health or wellbeing concern, to offer personal support and assistance as able. Informal intervention should be seen as a way of offering personal support to an individual and not as part of actual case management. However, those who engage in an informal intervention are encouraged to keep a personal record of some kind for future reference if needed.
- *Formal intervention*, where the individual concerned is interviewed by the appropriate staff member to address issues. Formal intervention will require the creation of a case management file or record of proceedings, to be placed in the student or staff file.
- *Referral for professional help*, where, after internal intervention, it is clear that the individual's problem requires ongoing management by a qualified professional. Records of referrals will be kept in the case management file or student/staff file, as will any information provided by the professional concerned.
- *Crisis management*, where a specific incident requires immediate and significant action on the part of the college in response. This may involve contacting emergency services or police, or enacting emergency procedures for the building or campus. Crisis management will require record keeping and reporting in line with the *Critical Incident Policy and Procedures*.

### 2.3.4 Confidentiality

- Information regarding an individual's state of health and wellbeing will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed without the consent of that individual.
- Records kept as part of case management will remain secure and confidential and may be accessed only by authorised persons.
- Disclosure of information without consent may take place in emergency situations (e.g. to rescue or medical personnel), where the safety of the individual concerned is under threat or where legal issues are involved.

### 2.3.5 Outcomes

*Possible outcomes for students:*

- assessment of capacity to continue study;
- continuation of study under conditions or supervision;
- granting of special consideration, e.g. conditions of study, attendance patterns, due dates for assessments, exam participation;
- voluntary withdrawal from study, e.g. deferment;
- suspension of studies;
- termination of enrolment;

- student discipline proceedings;
- return to study after relevant medical or psychological clearance, and approval from appropriate staff.

*Possible outcomes for staff:*

- assessment of capacity to continue work;
- continuation of work under supervision;
- voluntary annual leave;
- sick leave;
- extended leave without pay;
- suspension pending further consideration;
- resignation;
- termination of employment;
- return to work after relevant medical, psychological clearance, and approval from appropriate staff.

### **3. PROCEDURES**

#### **3.1 Reporting of a health and wellbeing concern**

These procedures assume that the individual concerned is seeking help. They do not apply to such things as personal conversations, where an individual is simply voicing a concern without indicating any need or intention to seek help.

1. The individual self-reports the concern:
  - if a student, to a peer: the peer assists the individual to report to an appropriate staff member or directly to the Welfare Officer; or
  - if a student, to a member of staff: the member of staff offers informal support as able, and reports the concern to the Welfare Officer;
  - if a member of staff, to the Welfare Officer: the Welfare Officer initiates formal assessment, intervention, and case management.
2. The concern is reported by a peer:
  - if a student, to a member of staff: the member of staff makes contact with the student for informal intervention, and reports the concern to the Welfare Officer or assists the student to contact the Welfare Officer;
  - if a member of staff, to another member of staff: the second staff member reports, or assists the peer to report, to the Welfare Officer;
  - in either case, the Welfare Officer contacts the individual for formal assessment, intervention, and case management.
3. The concern is reported by a member of staff:
  - to the Welfare Officer: the Welfare Officer contacts the individual for formal assessment, intervention and case management.
4. The concern is reported by a non-staff person, including a professional, other than a student:
  - to a member of staff: the member of staff reports the concern to the welfare officer, or assists the person to contact the Welfare Officer;
  - to the Welfare Officer: the Welfare Officer contacts the individual for formal assessment, intervention and case management, and keeps a record of the report.

#### **3.2 Intervention**

1. Informal:
  - The staff member receives or initiates contact with the individual.
  - The staff member offers personal support as able and appropriate.
  - The staff member reports the intervention to the Welfare Officer with the individual's consent.
  - The staff member keeps a personal record for future reference if needed.

2. Formal:

The Welfare Officer:

- receives contact from or initiates contact with the individual;
- interviews the individual to assess the nature of the case;
- creates a case management file;
- discusses relevant strategies with the individual and initiates appropriate strategies;
- refers the individual for professional help if necessary.

### 3. Referral:

The Welfare Officer:

- reviews case management information;
- recommends professional help to the individual and provides relevant information;
- contacts relevant professional help on behalf of the individual as appropriate;
- records relevant information in case management file;
- maintains contact with the professional as appropriate for follow-up and ongoing case management.

The professional:

- receives relevant information from the Welfare Officer and commences case management;
- provides relevant information as appropriate to the Welfare Officer for follow-up and internal case management.

### 4. Crisis (e.g. physical collapse, mental breakdown, extreme or threatening behaviour)

- The *Critical Incident Policy and Procedures* are followed.
- The Welfare Officer contacts appropriate people as soon as possible.
- The Welfare Officer monitors and follows up as appropriate.

### 3.3 Review of capacity to work or study

The Welfare Officer:

- reviews all relevant medical, psychological and case management information;
- considers options available (continuation of work or study either with or without conditions, temporary suspension of work or study, termination of work or study);
- discusses the individual case with appropriate staff (board, supervisor, Principal) for a decision on the individual's capacity;
- advises the individual of the decision and takes steps necessary to implement it.

### 3.4 Responsibilities

- SCD will monitor and review the implementation of the policy
- Member Institutions will implement the policy and manage specific cases. Member institutions will also report information to the SCD, either as part of normal reporting obligations or where policy dictates that specific incidents should be reported to SCD management.
- Employees will be expected to disclose any relevant information during the recruitment process, including relevant health and wellbeing concerns that might affect their capacity to work.
- Students will be expected to disclose any relevant information during the application and enrolment process. Students are ultimately responsible for their own health and wellbeing, but they are expected to seek help when needed and to report any health and wellbeing concerns that might affect their capacity to study.
- Employees are expected to report any incidents of a serious nature.
- Teaching staff, as part of their duty of care, will observe student behaviour and performance and report any concerns to relevant supervisors. Teachers may initiate informal intervention, or offer informal support to the student, but are not responsible for case management.
- Welfare Officers will undertake formal intervention, monitoring, and case management, and will refer individuals to professionals if needed.
- Specialists to whom individuals are referred are responsible for specific diagnoses, initial and ongoing treatment, and reporting of relevant information to Welfare Officers.
- SCD recognises that the involvement of family, friends, church, and other social networks, will have a role to play in the management of health and wellbeing of staff and students. While these people are not bound by the terms of this policy, and may act independently of any action taken by the College, it is also assumed that any involvement in support of the individual will be done in cooperation with the College as appropriate.

### 3.5 Record-keeping

- Where a health and wellbeing concern is identified, notes will be kept in the student or staff member's file.
- Where an intervention strategy has been enacted, a case management file will be created to be kept in conjunction with the individual's staff or student file.
- Creating and maintaining of records relevant to health and wellbeing concerns will be done in accordance with *Record-Keeping Policy* and *Privacy Policy*.

### 3.6 Monitoring and review

- SCD will collect information at least once per year, to assess the effectiveness of its approach to health and wellbeing. Methods might include student and staff surveys, interviews, or focus groups.
- SCD will make reasonable policy adjustments in response to particular cases, where the nature of the case has revealed a need for such adjustments.
- The policy will be reviewed periodically and revised as appropriate.
- SCD will seek input from relevant health care professionals to assist in revisions of the policy.

### Sources

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