

# Support for Students

## Procedure

### Student Support Activities: Engagement

#### Orientation Program

ICAT conducts a compulsory orientation program at the commencement of each trimester to provide students with information to support their move to tertiary education and life at ICAT. It is a structured program of activities to enable new students to become familiar with the tertiary environment and the skills and knowledge needed to succeed. This process aims to build awareness and understanding of key academic and administrative processes, policies, and services, to prepare students for successful learning, and to promote early engagement with their learning environment, such as:

- enrolment and course progression requirements, policies, and processes
- campus facilities and resources
- assessment requirements, academic integrity, policies, and processes
- academic support services to assist with the transition to tertiary study
- counselling and personal wellbeing service
- emergency and health services

### Support Services: Academic Progress

#### Academic Success Preparedness

In addition to ICAT's standard student entry procedures, the Institute has an academic skills workshop within the mandatory Orientation program. This workshop is not just a routine onboarding process; it goes beyond the introduction of policy and procedure as a student at the Institute. The workshop is facilitated by the Academic Support Advisor and supplemented with an additional session led by the Student Support Advisor. These workshops address a wide range of student concerns related to higher education, providing vital information and support. There is a consideration that these academic and non-academic supports acknowledge, consider and advocate for First Nations Students and this is outlined in our *Access and Equity Policy* within the Institute's ATSI Framework.

The Institute's approach is aligned with the commitment to comprehensive pastoral care that extends beyond mere study skill support. The Institute believes in early intervention and support, be it for personal or study-related issues. This echoes the ICAT mission to provide holistic support, ensuring the wellbeing and success of students. ICAT is dedicated to identifying, protecting, and supporting vulnerable students and those at risk of failing.

The efforts to positively impact and intervene are achieved by the following:

- Pastoral Care Workshop: Academic – Orientation week
- Pastoral Care Workshop: Wellbeing – Orientation week
- Academic Support 121 Session – Weeks 1-3
- Wellbeing Support 121 Session – Weeks 1-3
- Wellbeing Support 121 Session – Weeks 1-3
- Wellbeing Support 121 Session – Weeks 1-3
- Commencing Survey + Check-in – Week 4
- Mid-Trimester Check-in – Week 6
- Assessment and Exam Support Check-in – Week 8

## Academic Success and Progression

ICAT strived to create a supportive environment that not only identifies and supports at-risk students but also empowers all students to thrive in their studies. Students who are flagged at-risk are communicated with early and frequently from the start of each trimester.

This is to ensure two things:

- They feel supported and capable of making progress and succeeding, as well as ensuring they are committed to their studies for that trimester.
- Intervention is done early so that students who may not have the capacity to fulfill their study obligations for that study period are supported and have the agency to take a break from their studies or reduce their load before the census date passes and they become academically and financially liable for their units.

The efforts to positively impact and intervene are achieved by the following:

- Students who are flagged at-risk in the first few weeks of each study period [pre-census] are contacted and a request is made that they meet with either the Academic Support

Advisor [ASA] or Student Support Advisor [SSA]. Mental health and wellbeing support is offered as is academic mentoring.

- Tutoring and mentoring is offered to students on a 121 basis with the ASA
- Lecturer consultation in-person hour – every lecturer has 2-hours of consultation time each week during trimester. For two weeks of the trimester each lecturer facilitates these hours on-campus F2F as a drop-in session so students can have an opportunity for discussion, questions, mentorship, or support.
- Study Hall [Tuesdays 9am-10am and Thursdays 1pm-2pm] – Before class on a Tuesday and between classes on a Thursday, the dedicated ASA will facilitate an open study environment, welcoming students from all courses and units to come together. This collaborative setting encourages students to study with their peers while benefitting from the guidance and consultation provided by our ASA. ICAT believes this initiative will foster a supportive and conducive learning atmosphere, promoting academic success and peer-to-peer knowledge exchange.

## Academic Success and Progression

As students progress through their studies, ICAT consistently assesses academic and non-academic suitability for continuing study, especially students who have already triggered alerts.

This section of the policy and the principles listed must be read in conjunction with the *Monitoring Academic Progression Policy*.

- The Institute has a proactive and systematic approach to monitoring unit and course progression.
- Academic progress is monitored after each study period, and students are assigned one of five academic status levels.
- Successful completion of a course of study means students have completed all unit requirements and achieved the learning outcomes required for a degree, certificate or diploma issued by the Institute.
- Continuous monitoring assists with the early identification of 'at risk' students and the implementation of intervention plans.
- Students who are identified as potentially at risk or 'at risk' will be supported by the Institute's support and intervention strategies.

## Schedule of Activities for Identifying Students At-Risk

See *Monitoring Academic Progression Policy*

Timeframe	Activity
Identification of previous trimester SARS	Formal identification of students who have failed one or more subjects – Identify what factors may have contributed to the SAR situation and record on student file for ongoing management. Determine an appropriate program of support for each individual student and document.
Lecturer and staff training on SARS identification and support	Training program devised and delivered to teaching and student administration staff on identifying, following up and managing potential and actual students 'at risk'. This is delivered before the start of the trimester.
Orientation	Communication message to include how we provide assistance and monitor student progression through our SARS Program.
Feedback on Assessments	Lecturers will provide clear and consistent information on assessment tasks and timely feedback on results to assist students in achieving learning outcomes and requirements of their course (in accordance with the Assessment Policy)
Week 1	Check roll by the end of the week to identify students who have not attended. Contact students by phone and email to determine the cause and decide on an outcome (i.e., intervention strategy in accordance with the Institute's Attendance & Participation Policy). Monitor activity logs LMS. Set up interviews with continuing students who were identified SARS in the previous study period.
Week 3	Identify students who have not turned up to two or more classes and issue an attendance alert letter acknowledging the situation and inviting students to an academic support meeting with their Program Coordinator to discuss.
Week 4	Lecturers to report any students who appear to be struggling or disengaged to the Program Coordinator.
Week 5	Review rolls again to identify any students who are failing to attend class and have missed two or more classes. Send a second alert letter to those students who have not attended and are enrolled in units. Identify all students who may have failed any assessments to date and issue a first formal academic progression alert letter offering academic skills assistance and inviting students to meet with their Program Coordinator to discuss.
Week 6	Set-up academic support interviews with SARS to check on progression and offer additional support.
Week 8	Ask lecturers to report any students struggling or have failed a summative assessment. Issue second formal academic progression alert letter

	offering academic skills assistance and inviting students to an academic support meeting with their Program Coordinator to discuss.
Moderation & Grade Ratification Committee Meeting	In preparation for Moderation & Grade Ratification Committee, prepare a separate report that identifies students who have failed units in preparation for support in the following trimester
Post Moderation & Grade Ratification Committee Meeting	For domestic students who failed, issue third formal academic progression alert letter inviting students to meet with their Program Coordinator to discuss their academic options going into next trimester. For international students, issue an Intention to Report letter in relation to their breach of visa conditions.

## Reporting – At-Risk Students

See *ICAT Student Support Framework and Register*

Stage	Support	Action	Application	Reporting Procedure
1	Orientation	In the leadup to orientation, ASA must ensure that the 'Academic Skills' page in Moodle is up to date, accessible and relevant. ASA is then introduced to new students at orientation each trimester	All new students	ASA must update and manage Academic Skills page on Moodle. After orientation, ASA must post on Moodle orientation page with a follow-up welcome message and clear notification of contact hours and methods of communication.
2	Academic Support Meeting	Student-initiated consultation with ASA to discuss	All students [student-initiated]	ASA must document student consultation

		academic skills and study support		using Stage 2 Report Template.
3	Academic At-Risk Support	Provider-initiated consultation with ASA to discuss academic progression due to student at-risk status	Failure to engage, extended absence, poor attendance or poor engagement	ASA must document student consultation using Stage 3 Report Template and report to Registrar.
4	Academic Probation 1 Support	Provider-initiated consultation with ASA to monitor academic progression due to medium-risk probation status	Failed more than 50% of units in one trimester	ASA must document student consultation using Stage 4 Report Template and report to Registrar and Director of Education [and SSA referral if required].
5	Academic Probation 2 Support	Provider-initiated consultation with ASA to manage academic progression due to high-risk probation status	Failed more than 50% of units in two consecutive trimesters	ASA must document student consultation using Stage 5 Report Template and report to Registrar and Director of Education [and SSA referral if required]
6	Enrolment Suspension Support	Provider-initiated consultation with ASA to advocate for student completion of units in order to fulfill study period requirements prior to suspension of enrolment in full	Intention to Cancel [provider-initiated]	ASA must document student consultation using Stage 6 Report Template and report to Registrar, Director of Education and Director of Operations and Compliance for final report to Academic Progression Committee [and SSA referral if required]

## Library and Learning Support

ICAT has an online library, providing students and lecturers with access to textbooks, journals, magazines, databases, reference materials and multimedia resources. ICAT endeavours to make access to all learning resources, including textbooks, free for students as part of ICAT's commitment to equal access to digital resources across the two campuses.

The ICAT Library can be accessed through the Moodle Homepage or through Student Resources > Library Resources.

ICAT has also provided students with access to a curated range of Business and Communications resources. These resources also extend to the specialisations within courses. All resources can be accessed via the Library home page on the Learning Management System.

### **Dedicated Librarian**

ICAT has a dedicated Librarian as permanent full-time member of staff based at our Sydney campus. The Librarian is available for individual consultations with students. These consultations cover a range of areas, including, but not limited to, accessing online resources, information literacy, academic integrity, and referencing. To ensure equal opportunity across delivery sites, consultations can be booked online via the Learning Management System and can be conducted online or on campus. Students can access an unlimited number of consultations. The Librarian also works with the academic team in the sourcing of resources and manages the acquisition of Library resources.

### **General Support Resources**

There are a range of support resources available on the Student Resources page on the Learning Management System. These resources include orientation resources, links to academic skills and academic support, IT support resources, student forms, policies, and timetable information. These resources are updated regularly and can be freely accessed by students.

### **Academic Skills Resources**

To ensure that students have access to academic support for matters relating to academic integrity, academic literacy, information literacy, and general study skills. The Institute of Creative Arts and Technology has a dedicated Academic Skills Tile on the Learning Management System, managed by our Academic Support Advisor (ASA).

Our Academic Support Advisor (ASA) provides advice and guidance to students to help them achieve academic success through study guides, academic skills workshops and guidance on time management, organisation, and other academic-related topics. Students can book one-on-one consultations or group sessions via the booking page on Moodle, either online or on-campus. The ASA may work with students on an ongoing basis, or through one-off consultations depending on the specific needs of the student. These sessions are unlimited for all students.

The Academic Support Advisor is also the Unit Coordinator for the first-year co-requisite Academic Skills unit and works with the Academic Teaching Staff to embed academic skills into all units of study. Each trimester the ASA conducts targeted individual literacy, numeracy and other academic study skills sessions that blend the learning outcomes of a variety of units into a curriculum that reinforces foundational literacy and numeracy skills to ensure academic preparedness and proficiency throughout a student's study journey.

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## Support Services: Learning Experience

### Dedicated Study Areas (On-campus)

ICAT has dedicated areas on both campuses where students can undertake personal study. These areas include desks, seating, power points and access to ICAT Wi-Fi. On the Sydney campus, students also have access to a student lounge with a kitchen and a dedicated computer lab for personal study. These computers are free to access during campus opening hours and do not require prior booking.

### IT Helpdesk

The IT Service Desk in Moodle feeds through to a ticketed support system called Zendesk. This is monitored and manned by the Student Services team who endeavour to respond to enquiries within 24 hours. Enquiries are triaged based on need, delegated to the relevant team member, and escalated up the chain of command as required. We have also engaged an external helpdesk team who service our Learning Management System (LMS) and Student Management System (SMS), as well as Google Workspace for student email accounts. Zendesk tickets that require IT support are then fed to this team, actioned, and resolved as soon as possible.

### Student Council (SC)

The SC plays a key role in organising events and other activities particularly in the first three weeks of the trimester to increase the opportunities for students to engage with staff and faculty. A schedule of events is organised for each trimester. As well as this they play a key function in representing the questions and concerns of the student body in front of Institute leadership, as well as Academic Board.

The Student Council is committed to enhancing the student experience and ensuring that the voices and needs of our student body are heard. They regularly convene to understand the concerns, requests, and overall aspects of student life that should be communicated to our Institute's leadership. Through open discussions and active engagement with students, we strive to facilitate peer support and create a more inclusive and supportive campus environment. Your feedback and input are invaluable to us, and we are here to advocate for your needs and work towards positive changes that benefit all students.

## Support Services: Students at Risk Counselling & Personal Wellbeing Service

Transition into higher education can be a stressful time for some students. The pressure of work and the prospect of examinations may generate feelings of stress that become difficult to manage. Events associated with relocating to a different country and new home can also make studying stressful. In addition to academic support, ICAT provides all students with the opportunity



to access an independent professional psychological counselling service to assist them with their journey through Institute life and tertiary study.

Students can access two counselling sessions (at no cost to themselves) and a third session may be provided at the recommendation of the Counsellor. Students are also invited to contact the Student Support Advisor (SSA) for a confidential personal discussion. From these discussions, the SSA will refer students to the Counselling Service for specialist advice in mental health and/or other personal health issues.

As part of the support service, within the Institute, the SSA facilitates a 'wellbeing' session as part of Orientation program outlining the counselling service, how to succeed in tertiary study, and how to improve personal wellbeing for study successes.

## Financial Aid & Non-Academic Support

As part of the support service, within the Institute, there are mechanisms to support students who require assistance, support and in more severe cases intervention and crisis support and counselling. This is an important aspect of the Institute's support services as many students struggle due to non-academic issues.

The following support services are in place for students to access at any point during their studies, on an incident or an ongoing basis.

- Financial Wellbeing Support – a support meeting with the Student Support Advisor, the Director of Education, and the Director of Operations and Compliance to understand a student's circumstances and implement strategies and provisions to ensure they can continue to access education and progress through their studies, with their financial circumstances [hardship or insecurity] considered
- Student Living Support – a support meeting with Student Services and the Student Support Advisor which assesses a student's circumstances and needs related to accommodation, housing, safety, and wellbeing so that ICAT can communicate with the accommodation services within Sydney to assist in placing a student in safe, accessible, and sustainable housing
- Mental Health Support – a support meeting with the Student Support Advisor to assess the student's circumstances and provide guidance, support, or comfort during trying circumstances. PeopleSense Counselling – a partner of ICAT – is also available 24/7 to assist students with crisis support or counselling in the event of an emergency.

## Provisions for Support

At ICAT there are provisions for special consideration, exemption, extension, reasonable academic and non-academic adjustments available to students who are experiencing difficulty with their studies. These reasonable provisions are made to assist a student who might be at risk and need additional time, guidance, and support to complete their studies.

Proactive offers of 'special consideration,' 'extension' and or 'exemption' are made available for

students who have experienced or been affected by any significant life event, not limited to the following:

- Serious medical condition or injury
- Bereavement of a close family member, such as parents, grandparents, siblings, children
- Major political unrest or natural disaster that requires immediate travel
- A traumatic experience such as an accident, crime or being witness to these experiences
- Military service or jury service
- Severe disruption to domestic arrangements or homelessness
- Imprisonment

Proactive offers of 'reasonable adjustment,' 'extension' and or 'exemption' are made available for students who have/experience disability, disorder, or experience incapacities in any means, and are not limited to the following:

- Total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or
- Total or partial loss of a part of the body; or
- The presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or
- The presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or
- The malfunction, malformation, or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or
- A disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or
- A disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgement that results in disturbed behaviour; and
  - Includes a disability that presently exists or
  - Previously existed but no longer exists, or
  - May exist in the future, or
  - Is imputed to a person

The ICAT Student Handbook provides details on how to access the counselling service and provides a directory of national and state Emergency, Community & Health Services.

The Institute is unwavering in its commitment to providing comprehensive, consistent, and continuous support to our students. ICAT recognises the diverse and evolving needs of the student body, and its focus and efforts extend across the spectrum of support, encompassing assistance, advice, mentoring, compassion, and necessary adjustments. The Institute's aim is not only to help students sustain their studies but to empower them to excel in their academic pursuits.

## Change and Version Control

Version	Date Approved	Authored by	Approved by	Description
08112023 V1.1	30 Nov 2023	Director of Operations and Compliance	Academic Board	Renamed Support for Students Policy in line with guideline and obligation changes under HESA 2003 because of the cessation of 50% rule for FEE-HELP eligibility for students [2023] and new procedure created

## Policy Information

Author:	Director of Operations and Compliance
Policy owner:	Director of Education
Approved by:	Academic Board
Approval date:	30 November 2023
Status:	Approved
Next review due:	November 2028