

## Academic Language and Learning Support Policy

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### 1. Background

Gateway Business College (GBC) is committed to strong outcomes for student achievement. Providing academic language and learning skills support programs tailored to the needs of students, from transition to course completion, is part of GBC's institutional framework to ensure high standards in higher education teaching and learning.

### 2. Purpose

This policy establishes the framework for monitoring the academic language and learning needs of GBC students and providing the necessary academic skills support services students require to successfully engage in teaching and learning activities, progress in and complete a course of study.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to GBC staff and students.

### 4. Definitions

**Academic Board:** The board responsible for academic governance at GBC. The Academic Board reports and advises the Corporate Governance Board on academic activity. This board oversees academic activities such as teaching, learning, scholarship, research, course approval, student outcomes, academic standards and academic policy.

**Academic language skills:** The reading, writing and speaking skills students need to successfully engage with higher education teaching and learning activities, course materials, disciplinary knowledge, concepts, modes of critical inquiry, required readings and assessment tasks.

**Academic language and learning skills support services:** The academic skills support programs and activities GBC provides for all students to ensure equivalent opportunities for successful transition, progression and completion of a course of study. These services are offered during orientation and throughout each semester. Designed to support teaching and learning activities and requirements, they include workshops, seminars and individual academic skills support sessions.

**At risk:** A student is identified as being at risk when their academic performance suggests they may fail to meet the minimum academic requirements progressing in or completing a course of study.

**Domestic student:** An enrolled student who is an Australian or New Zealand citizen, or an Australian permanent resident.

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**International student:** An enrolled student who has been granted a student visa (subclass 500) by the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP), which entitles them to study full-time in Australia.

**Learning skills:** The skills, habits and abilities students need to successfully engage in higher education teaching and learning and lifelong learning. These include time management, note-taking, exam preparation, critical reading, writing, speaking and thinking.

**Non-academic support services:** The personal wellbeing support services GBC provides for students. These include counselling, stress management, on-campus safety and security, access to emergency services, advocacy, legal advice, health services, accommodation advice and international student assistance.

**Orientation program:** A scheduled program of events and activities that occur prior to the commencement of each semester to introduce students to GBC, fellow students and the academic learning environment. Activities are informative, social and academic, including campus tours, academic skills workshops and introductions to key GBC staff and teaching and learning staff members.

**Student handbook:** A resource for GBC students, containing course-specific information, administrative information and requirements, student responsibilities, academic skills support services and non-academic support services.

**Student support officer:** A non-academic GBC staff member who provides information, advice and guidance to students on wellbeing and safety, refers students to non-academic support services, including counselling if required, coordinates social activities for students, provides international student support,

## 5. Principles

Academic language and learning skills support programs are available to all GBC students and designed to ensure all students have equivalent opportunities for transition into, progression through and completion of a course of study.

GBC will provide strong transition programs that support all students through the initial phases of their course of study.

The academic language and learning skills support programs GBC provides are developed to meet the individual learning needs of each student cohort.

A schedule of academic language and learning skills workshops run throughout each semester and are available to all students who wish to attend.

GBC students have access to the Academic Skills Advisor for individual consultation and academic support.

GBC is committed to ensuring equitable access to higher education and will develop support services catering to students from groups who are under-represented in the

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student population, and to students who face extenuating circumstances that may affect their learning. This may include students who:

- have a disability or long-term illness
- experience difficult family circumstances
- have been unduly affected by socio-economic circumstances
- completed secondary school in a regional or isolated area
- identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Academic language and learning skills support programs are continually monitored, reviewed and improved to meet student learning needs and teaching and learning requirements, and in response to feedback from students and teaching and learning staff.

## 6. Procedures

### 6.1 Academic language and learning skills workshops

GBC offers students a range of academic language and learning skills workshops to support transition, progression and course completion, which include:

- How to use the Moodle LMS
- How to use the GBC Library and online catalogue
- Academic reading and writing
- Maintaining academic integrity in assessment tasks
- Referencing and citation
- Research skills
- Study skills
- Essay writing
- Report writing
- Effective time management
- Notetaking
- Oral Presentation skills
- Exam preparation
- Negotiating group work assessment tasks and activities.

### 6.2 Identifying students in need of academic skills support

Teaching and learning staff monitor individual student engagement and progress within the classroom and assessment tasks to ensure that any student needing additional support in academic skills is directed to an Academic Skills Advisor for support and guidance during the semester. This approach is designed to ensure that student learning needs are met and supported before the student reaches a stage of being at risk of unsatisfactory progress.

Students who are identified as being at risk or demonstrate unsatisfactory progress in their course of study will be provided with an individualised program of academic skills support, targeted to address their specific learning needs and goals. This is developed by the Course Coordinator and Academic Skills Advisor in collaboration with the student.

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Students from under-represented groups are monitored to ensure their specific learning needs are being met in the classroom and that supplemental academic skills support is provided in order to strengthen their participation, attainment and progression.

Teaching and learning staff liaise with Academic Skills staff to coordinate any workshops they identify as beneficial to the student group as a whole.

Students who are identified as breaching academic misconduct guidelines must attend compulsory individual sessions with the Academic Skills Advisor on maintaining academic integrity, correct referencing and citation practice.

### 6.3 Informing students of the availability of academic skills support

GBC students are informed of academic language and learning skills programs and support available to them via:

- The GBC website
- Orientation sessions
- The student online portal
- The student handbook
- The Moodle LMS
- Email
- Teaching and Learning staff
- The Student Support Officer
- On-campus promotional material.

### 6.4 Responsibilities

Teaching and learning staff are responsible for:

- Promoting academic skills workshops to students
- Monitoring student performance to identify students in need of additional academic skills support
- Identifying students at risk of unsatisfactory progress in accordance with the *Students at Risk and Unsatisfactory Progress Policy*
- Directing students to the Academic Skills Advisor for individual consultation as required.

Course Coordinators are responsible for ensuring that Academic Language and Learning Support programs meet the needs of the student cohort enrolled in a course of study. This includes course specific academic requirements.

Course Coordinators are responsible for monitoring student progress and identifying performance trends within a course of study that indicate the need for additional academic skills support workshops.

The Academic Skills Advisor works in collaboration with teaching and learning staff and is responsible for developing a program of academic skills support to meet the learning needs of the GBC student cohort. This includes the delivery of workshops and individual student consultation.

The Academic Skills Advisor is responsible for developing individual academic skills support plans for students who have been identified as being at risk of unsatisfactory progress, and working with them to improve their academic skills and performance.

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The Academic Skills Advisor reports on the development and outcomes of academic language and learning skills support services to the Teaching and Learning Committee.

The Teaching and Learning Committee is responsible for approving the schedule of academic language and learning skills support programs at the beginning of each year.

### 6.5 English language support for academic purposes

English language support for academic purposes is available for domestic and international students, particularly to assist students whose first language is not English.

### 6.6 Monitoring, review, improvement and reporting

Academic language and learning skills support programs are monitored and reviewed by the Academic Skills Advisor, Course Coordinators and Teaching and Learning Committee.

Feedback on academic language and learning skills support programs is sought from students and teaching and learning staff each semester. This feedback is used to review and improve the delivery of academic skills support services at GBC.

The Academic Skills Advisor reports to the Teaching and Learning Committee on student attendance at academic language and learning skills workshops, individual student consultations and forward planning.

The Teaching and Learning Committee reports to the Academic Board on the performance of academic language and learning skills support services and advises on the need for additional resources and investment in student academic skills support.

### 6.7 Non-academic student support services

External and non-academic factors can have an impact on student wellbeing and affect academic transition, performance, progression and completion. Students will be directed to non-academic support services as required.

For further information consult the *Student Counselling Policy* and *Student Welfare Policy*.

## 7. Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Academic Board every three years, or more frequently should the Board deem it necessary.

Document History			
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Related Documents	Students at Risk and Unsatisfactory Progress Policy Student Counselling Policy Student Representation and Feedback Policy Student Welfare Policy		
Version No.	Summary of Changes		
1.	2. Purpose; updated information for consistency 6. Procedures; appended information with additional details		