Under 18 (U18) Student Welfare Policy

Name:	**Student Welfare policy**
Approved by:	PEO
Date Approved:	19 November 2024
Implementation Owner	General Manager – George Brown College
Maintenance Owner	General Manager – George Brown College
Review Date	20 November 2025

Purpose

George Brown College's (GBC's) U18 - Student Welfare Policy provides a detailed framework for GBC to deal with the welfare of its under-18 students. GBC takes the welfare of its under-18 students very seriously.

Scope

This Policy and Procedure applies to:

- all international students aged under 18 years at their commencement date; and
- all arrangements for the accommodation, support, and welfare of such students for which the College has accepted approval responsibility where the student will live in Australia under accommodation, support, and welfare arrangements that have been approved by the College.

This policy also ensures that students are supported to adjust to achieve their learning goals and to achieve satisfactory academic progress towards meeting the learning outcomes of their chosen course.

This policy outlines the support services available to students and it outlines how students are provided with information on these services, and how to access them.

GBC is committed to providing high-quality support services to students including the maintenance of sufficient support staff who are eligible to deal with under 18 students, to meet the needs of all students enrolled with GBC.

Student support services will be regularly reviewed through GBC's Continuous Improvement Policy. The services provided by GBC are at no additional cost to the students.

Where external support services may be required, GBC will not charge the students for the referral. Under 18 students will require consent from their legal guardian, for any requests they place to the College.

This Policy meets the requirements of Standard 6 of the National Code 2018 and Clause 1.7 of Registration Standards 2015. Registered providers to support students to adjust to studying and living in Australia, to achieve their learning goals, and to achieve satisfactory academic progress towards meeting the learning outcomes of the course.

1. Assessing extra need requirements from the application process.

GBC recognizes that all people learn differently and acknowledges that some students may require additional support. Additional support will be provided for any students experiencing: issues such as disability and access or any other issues or special needs that may affect their ability to achieve their training goals.

Provision of additional support services will be provided where necessary to enable students to participate in the same way as any other person regardless of whether support services have been required.

Students will be assessed based on the questionnaire given in the application form under Impairment and Disability.

Students are required to respond with a “Yes” to a minimum of 10 of the 15. If the student's answers include more than 5 “No”, an interview with the student’s advisor and trainer is conducted to identify whether the student needs to be transferred to a different course.

An individual support plan is established, describing educational support measures to be used to support students’ learning.

Students will need to meet with the student’s advisor fortnightly to monitor their progress. During these meetings, the student will be continuously reassessed. Educational support measures will be used until the student demonstrates that can independently perform all tasks listed in the questionnaire.

Those students who answer “No” to Questions 1-4 of the tasks included in the questionnaire, will meet with their trainer to establish an individual support plan, including measures to be used to support students learning.

Where there is perceived difficulty in achieving learning goals, the trainer will discuss these issues with the student. The student will be provided with information about possible alternative pathways, additional tools and resources available, and options and choices for accessing a supportive network. The information provided will vary depending on the individual needs of the student. These services to students are provided at no additional cost.

The trainer will reassess the student periodically and will continue to provide educational support until the student demonstrates that she or he can independently perform all tasks listed in the Questionnaire.

All records must be kept in the student file.

2. Orientation Program

GBC is committed to ensuring that all students under 18 receive support to adjust to life and study. An orientation program will be compulsory for all students prior to starting their course.

Orientation programs will be conducted one week prior to the start of each Academic Term. Where a student is admitted to the course late, the Student Services Officer or the Compliance SSO will go through the orientation process on an individual basis. The orientation program will include information provided through a PowerPoint presentation on:

a) Details of internal and external support services available to assist in the transition into life and study. Such services include welfare services, accommodation services, academic and career advice, IT support, and student learning assistance, English language support, and social inclusion activities.
b) Legal, emergency, and health services.

c) Facilities and resources.
d) GBC organisational policies and procedures including course progress, attendance monitoring, deferral, suspension and cancellation, course transfer, and complaints and appeals.
e) Any student visa conditions relating to course progress.

All students will be referred to the Under 18 Student Handbook and U18 Students Policy and Procedure.

GBC will ensure that the orientation program is age-appropriate and culturally sensitive so as not to offend any student or their families or education agents. The orientation program will be reviewed annually to ensure that the information provided is correct and that it meets student needs.

3. Learning Support

Students are provided with a range of learning support options and resources to help them meet course requirements and maintain attendance such as:

a) Mentoring from appropriately qualified trainers.
b) Tutorial support assistance.
c) Computer and technology support.
d) Referral to external support services and or Welfare / Wellness Officers, if permitted by their legal guardian.
e) Literacy and Numeracy Support.

Where a student is identified as not meeting course requirements, the procedures for dealing with students at risk are identified in the GBC Academic Course Progress Policy. These services are provided to students at no additional cost. This policy applies to both adults and under 18 students.

4. Welfare and Wellbeing Services

Welfare services address the mental, physical, social, and spiritual well-being of students. This involves referral to appropriate support persons who can help with information/advice about accommodation, counselling, crisis services, disabilities and equity issues, financial matters, health, legal issues, medical issues, mental health, peer mentoring, programs promoting social interaction, religious and spiritual matters, and stress management. It may also include advice on academic and study issues.

Non-academic support is provided collectively by the Student Services team, Compliance Team, and Wellness Counsellor.

GBC recognises that students may require access to welfare services to assist with issues that may arise through their studies, including course progress, attendance requirements, and accommodation issues. Information about welfare services available is provided in the Under 18 Student Handbook. Students are also informed about these services at course orientation.

Student Services offers assistance to students, if required, for dealing with homesickness, managing the budget, handling stress, and time management skills.

5. Accessing Services

Students wishing to access any support services should discuss this with their trainer or contact the Student

Services. Contact details for relevant staff are included in the Under 18 Student Handbook.

6. Free Legal Advice

Living and studying in an unfamiliar country can be challenging, particularly if something unforeseen happens such as being involved in an accident, being unfairly dismissed at work, being unfairly treated by your homestay provider, having insurance issues, being the perpetrator or victim of a crime, etc.

Whatever the case, Australia has flexible but very strict laws designed to protect its people, and as an international student, you have access to legal services like any Australian citizen. Please visit NSW Legal Aid (http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au) or Community Legal Centres NSW (http://www.clcnsw.org.au) to find the right legal aid according to your needs. Talk to the GBC Student Support team if you need assistance.

7. Student Code of Conduct

Students are required to follow all rules of the College and the instructions from staff representing GBC. Students are required to act in a non-discriminatory manner at all times and respect the rights of other students, staff, and visitors.

Students are also required to adhere to academic rules and regulations as directed by the College or its representatives. Where a student is found to have acted in a way that the College deems to be misconduct, the College may implement disciplinary action in the form of suspension or cancellation of a student's enrolment.

The purpose of the Student Code of Conduct is to ensure that there is a peaceful and conducive study and work environment at the GBC for all students and staff. The Student Code of Conduct applies to all students of the College, across all courses.

Student rights

All students have the right to:

- Be treated fairly and with respect by college staff and other students.
- Learn in an environment free of discrimination and harassment.
- Learn in a supportive and stimulating environment to pursue their goals.
- Have access to counselling if desired or required. Students are required to make an appointment with the Student Welfare Counsellor. Students will need consent from their legal guardians to do so.
- Privacy concerning records that contain personal information, subject to statutory requirements.
- Be given information about assessment procedures at the beginning of the subject/competency/module and progressive results as they occur.
- Lodge a complaint without fear of retaliation or victimisation. Students will need consent from their legal guardians to do so.

Student Responsibilities

All students have a responsibility to:

- Treat other students and College staff with respect and fairness.

- Follow any reasonable direction from a member of the College.
- Refrain from swearing, drinking, and eating in classrooms and other learning areas.
- Behave responsibly by not littering, harassing fellow students or staff, damaging, stealing, modifying, or misusing the College's or other student's property.
- Behave responsibly by not being under the influence of drugs and alcohol. That would be a serious offence.
- Refrain from using mobile phones, or any other electronic devices that may disrupt classes.
- Attend all scheduled classes
- Do all assessment tasks and examinations honestly, and not engage in plagiarism, collusion, or cheating.
- Follow normal safety practices, including wearing approved clothing and protective equipment, where required, and following both written and verbal directions given by the College staff.
- Not to behave in a way that would offend, embarrass or threaten others.
- Comply with all lawful regulations, rules, or procedures of the College that pertain to them.
- Students are required to pay according to their payment plan. Late payment will incur a penalty. Please refer to the 'Late payment Policy' given in this Handbook.
- Students must keep the College notified immediately of any changes in their contact details, such as changes made in their phone number, email address, etc. They are also responsible for informing the College immediately when there are any changes in the contact details of their legal guardians/parents.

Breach of Conduct

A Student breach of conduct occurs when a student behaves in the manner described below:

- Assaults, attempts to assault or threaten a person on the GBC premises.
- Acts contrary to Equal Opportunity practices of the College. Which is committed to the prevention and elimination of discrimination on the grounds of:
- Age
- Impairment
- Industrial activity
- Lawful sexual activity
- Marital status
- Physical features
- Political belief or activity
- Pregnancy
- Race
- Religious belief or activity
- Sex
- Status as a parent or a carer
- Personal association (whether as a relative or otherwise) with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes.
- Disobeys or disregards any lawful direction given by an officer of the College.
- Acts dishonestly or unfairly in connection with an examination, test, assignment, or other means of assessment conducted by the College.
- Deliberately obstructs any teaching activity, examination, or meeting of the College.
- Engages in any conduct or activity prejudicial to the management and good governance of the College.
- Wilfully damages or wrongfully deals with any College property.

- Attends the College whilst under the influence of alcohol or affected by drugs.
- Carries or uses such items as firearms, knives, syringes, etc. as a weapon.
- Fails by or within the agreed required date or period, to pay any fee or charge payable to the College.
- Fails to comply with WH&S regulations or wilfully places another person in a position of risk or Danger.
- Constantly interrupts class time through the use or presence of mobile phones or any other electronic devices.
- Uses abusive language

Provide misleading documents of information.

Additional Support Services for U18 Students. Students are provided with additional support services should they need any assistance from the below.

- **Headspace** – a free counselling service for people between 12-25 years of age
  Phone or visit 1800 650 890 https://headspace.org.au/
- **Kids Help Line**
  Telephone: 1800 55 1800 www.kidshelpline.com.au
- **Reach Out**
  www.reachout.com.au
- **Butterfly Foundation** - Provides support for eating disorders and body image issues; https://butterfly.org.au
- **Youth Hotline** - The Youth Hotline is free and open: on weekdays from 9.00 am to midnight. Friday to Sunday and public holidays—24 hours. Phone 1800 10 18 10.

Monitoring Homestay Accommodation

Where GBC agrees to accept responsibility for approving a student's welfare arrangements it will require the student to stay in GBC's approved homestay accommodation. GBC must ensure:

a. the good character of the homestay providers by obtaining working with children checks, personal interviews, and verifying references.

b. a good standard of homestay accommodation suitable for students, through home inspections undertaken by homestay provider.

c. GBC Staff will provide the homestay provider with the 'Initial and Regular Site Visit Checklist and Acknowledgement Form' to do this.

Students will also be required to meet with a nominated GBC staff member as often as he or she requires, but no less frequently than each month.

GBC meets the relevant Commonwealth, state, or territory legislation or other regulatory requirements relating to child welfare and protection appropriate to the jurisdiction in which they operate. This is irrespective of whether the provider is taking responsibility for the welfare arrangements, or whether the Department of Home Affairs has approved a nominated guardian.

GBC selects a Homestay Accommodation provider by checking the following requirements which may include but are not limited to:

- Ensuring WWCCs or Criminal Record Checks for staff and/or homestay providers.
- Ensuring regulation around reporting of child abuse by teachers, counsellors, or other support personnel.

- Ensuring any additional state or territory regulatory requirements, for example, 'Child Safe Standards' are maintained.

Also, refer to **Attachment A – List of Useful Contacts**.

Attachment A – List of Useful Contacts

Emergency Services Number Ambulance | Fire Brigade | Police	000
Lifeline (24 Telephone Counselling and Referral)	13 1114
Roads & Maritime Services for traffic hazards, information, and driving licences	13 22 13
SafeWork NSW	13 10 50
Health Direct Australia	1800 022 222
International Student Care Service (ISCS)	1800 056 449
Youth Allowance - Centrelink	132 490
Abortion Grief Counselling	1300 363 550
Alcohol and Drug Information Service (24-hour counselling)	1800 177 833
DVline (Domestic Violence support and referral)	1800 811 811
Family Drug Support Information, help and support for families affected by drugs	1300 368 186
Poisons Information Centre	131266
Pregnancy Counselling Australia (Pregnancy termination counselling)	1300 737 732
Pregnancy Help Line (24-hour counselling and information)	1300 139 313
Quitline 24-hour smoking cessation information and counselling	13 18 48
Salvation Army Salvo Care Line	1300 363 622
Statewide Sexual Assault Helpline	1800 010 120
Literacy and Numeracy Support: National Australian Council of Adult Literacy	03 9469 2950
NSW Adult Literacy and Numeracy Council	1300 655 506

Variations

GBC reserves the right to vary, replace, or terminate this policy from time to time.

This policy/procedure is to be reviewed a minimum of twelve (12) months from this date.

Disclaimer:

A printed copy of this document may not be the most recent version. Please check X:\GBC Central for the current version

Change History

Version	Approval date	Review by	Approved by	Change
V.7	19 November 2024	General Manager	PEO	Change of Address
V.6	22 April 2024	Compliance Consultant	PEO	Revised the form after internal audit requirements on Standard 5
V.5	30 May 2023	General manager	PEO	Added U18 student compliance requirements
V.4	25 May 2022	General manager	PEO	Development of policy