Mental Health, Wellbeing and Sexual Harassment Strategy Plan

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Policy Statement	
Purpose	Glencoe Institute of Higher Education ('the Institute') *Mental Health, Wellbeing and Sexual Harassment Strategy Plan* ('the Plan) outlines the Institute's commitment to fostering a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for all students and staff. This Plan details the proactive initiatives, and responsive measures aimed at promoting mental health, preventing sexual harassment, and ensuring the wellbeing of all students and staff.
Scope	This Policy applies to all members of the Institute including staff, students, contractors, visitors, Council, Board, and Committees and covers all Institute-related environments, both on and off campus, including academic, professional, and social settings.
Definitions	For definitions, please refer to the *Dictionary of Terms.*

1. Policy Principles

The Institute is committed to fostering a safe and supportive environment for all students and staff. The following are the principles guiding this Plan:

a) Aligning with relevant Commonwealth and Western Australian legislation, including the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HESF 2021),* the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act),* the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act),* and the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code),* ensuring the Institute's mental health, wellbeing, and sexual harassment measures meet legislative requirements and best practice standards in a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning and working environment;

b) Committing to a zero-tolerance approach to gender-based violence in line with the *National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022–2032* and the *Higher Education Action Plan Addressing Gender-Based Violence*;

c) Ensuring that mental health and wellbeing resources and support services are accessible to all staff and students, regardless of background or circumstance;

d) Promoting psychosocial safety through the proactive identification and management of psychosocial risks, and by fostering a supportive, inclusive, and respectful learning and working environment.

e) Emphasising proactive measures to promote mental health awareness and resilience-building among staff and students, and encouraging early intervention strategies to address issues;

f) Treating all incidents seriously, investigating them promptly, and resolving them with fairness and sensitivity;

g) Maintaining confidentiality and privacy for individuals seeking support or reporting incidents of sexual harassment;

h) Providing regular informative sessions for staff and students on mental health awareness, stress management, and sexual harassment prevention;

i) Aligning with institutional policies, national and state regulations, and ethical guidelines related to mental health, wellbeing, and sexual harassment, and upholding the highest standards of ethical conduct in all interactions and interventions;

j) Committing to regular reviews and evaluations of the policies and plan's effectiveness through feedback mechanisms and data analysis, allowing for adjustments and enhancements based on emerging best practices and community needs.

2. Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The Institute acknowledges the importance of the mental health and wellbeing of both students and staff, which impact the overall teaching and learning performance at the Institute. Therefore, to address this, the Institute will implement following strategies:

a) Protection

i. Protect personal information related to mental health and well-being ensuring the privacy and dignity of all individuals within the Institute;
ii. Implement systems to provide access to support services to address and mitigate mental health issues;
iii. Safeguard teaching, learning, and curriculum opportunities by promoting a positive environment and mental well-being through academic and extracurricular activities.

b) Promotion

i. Promote mental health literacy and supportive communication among staff and students by integrating mental health awareness workshop and informative sessions, where appropriate, into existing learning, induction, and professional development activities;
ii. Promote student support services for a supportive, positive, and health-promoting learning environment that enhances student mental wellbeing;
iii. Encourage students and staff to prioritise their mental health and wellbeing by practicing mindfulness and adopting positive lifestyle choices.

c) Intervention

i. Provide timely and coordinated support and referral for students and staff experiencing mental health concerns, aimed at reducing the risk of harm. This includes facilitating access to appropriate counselling, referral pathways, and wellbeing programs through a coordinated approach led by the Dean and Student Support Manager, consistent with *HESF 2021, Standard 2.3 (Wellbeing and Safety)*;
ii. Help students understand the factors contributing to mental health difficulties by providing relevant information and promoting access to available wellbeing supports through appropriate feedback and governance reporting mechanisms;
iii. Regularly raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing initiatives through workshops, communication channels, and institutional reporting, ensuring continuous improvement of supports while maintaining privacy and confidentiality in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*.

3. Sexual Harassment Prevention Strategy

The Institute is committed to preventing sexual harassment, sexual assault and ensuring a safe environment for all. The following strategies will be implemented:

a) Prevention

i. Establish clear procedures for reporting and addressing sexual misconduct;

ii. Conduct training and workshops on sexual harassment prevention for staff and students, ensuring training is culturally sensitive;
iii. Promote a culture of respect and zero tolerance through awareness campaigns.
iv. Develop and implement a Gender-Based Violence Action Plan to strengthen prevention, response, and support mechanisms, and to promote a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment.

b) Support
i. Provide confidential support services for victims of sexual misconduct;
ii. Ensure fair and sensitive handling of complaints and investigations;
iii. Offer resources and counselling to those affected by sexual misconduct.

c) Education
i. Educate students and staff on consent, boundaries, and respectful behaviour;
ii. Foster open dialogue and awareness through workshops and informative sessions;
iii. Encourage witnesses to intervene and support victims of sexual misconduct.

d) Accountability
i. Take actions against offenders through disciplinary actions and legal measures;
ii. Review and update policies and plans regularly to align with best practices and legal requirements;
iii. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of prevention strategies through established student feedback mechanisms.

4. Potential Mental Health Issues and Sexual Misconduct

List of potential mental health issues and forms of sexual harassment or assault at the Institute includes, but is not limited to:

Mental Health Issues	Sexual Harassment / Assault
Anxiety	Unwelcome sexual advances
Depression	Inappropriate touching
Stress	Sexual comments or jokes
Burnout	Sending or showing sexually explicit content
Panic attacks	Stalking
Social isolation	Sexual assault
Academic pressure	Coercion for sexual favours
Sleep disorders	Creating a hostile environment through unwanted sexual behaviour
Substance abuse	Retaliation or victimisation against individuals who report, support, or participate in the investigation of sexual harassment or assault is strictly prohibited.

5. Procedure for Reporting and Recording

a) Individuals experiencing or witnessing mental health concerns or sexual harassment should promptly report to the Student Support Manager ensuring confidentiality and sensitivity:
i. The Institute recognises that some individuals may prefer to make an anonymous report;

ii. Anonymous reports will be accepted and reviewed in accordance with the *Student Grievance Management Policy and Procedure*; however, the Institute's ability to investigate and respond may be limited if insufficient information is provided;
iii. Anonymous reports will be considered where safety, harassment, or abuse is alleged, and will be managed with the same sensitivity and procedural fairness as identified reports;
iv. If the complaint involves the Student Support Manager, it should be reported to the Dean; if the complaint involves the Dean, it must be reported directly to the Chair of the Governing Council, who will assume responsibility for oversight of the matter.

b) Report must provide details including dates, times, and descriptions of incident, along with any supporting evidence if applicable.

c) Incidents or allegations involving suspected criminal behaviour must be reported immediately to the relevant authorities. The Institute will initiate a prompt and thorough investigation led by the Dean or nominee. Where the matter relates to the Dean, the investigation will be led by the Chair of the Governing Council. The following timeframes apply to ensure procedural fairness, transparency, and consistency with the *Student Grievance Management Policy and Procedure* and the *Human Resource Management Policy and Procedure:*
i. Acknowledge receipt of the report within two (2) working days of submission;
ii. Arrange an initial meeting or interview within five (5) to ten (10) working days from acknowledgment;
iii. Provide a written outcome of the investigation within twenty (20) working days, or, where additional time is required, issue a written notice outlining the reason for the extension and the revised timeframe;
iv. Timeframes will be expedited where matters involve risks to safety, serious wellbeing concerns, or criminal allegations;

d) Fair treatment of all parties involved, including privacy and confidentiality, will be ensured.

e) Immediate support services will be provided for individuals reporting mental health issues or sexual harassment. For example: access to counselling, legal guidance, and other necessary resources will be facilitated.

f) Confidentiality will be maintained to the fullest extent possible throughout the reporting and investigation process.

g) Clear and transparent communication will be maintained throughout the process to ensure all parties understand the findings and any subsequent actions.

h) Students and staff have the right to appeal against decisions/actions as a result of investigation.

i) The Dean will provide regular reports at the Governing Council meetings.

j) The Council will monitor the effectiveness of this Plan and make necessary adjustments as required.

k) All records of incidents and outcomes related to mental health, wellbeing, and sexual misconduct will be managed in accordance with the *Records Management Policy and Procedure:*
i. Student records will be retained for a minimum of two (2) years after the student ceases enrolment, ensuring compliance with statutory and institutional requirements;
ii. Business and governance records, including investigation files and Council reports, will be retained for a minimum of seven (7) years in accordance with the *Records Management Policy and Procedure* and the *State Records Act 2000 (WA);*
iii. Records containing personal or sensitive information will be stored securely and disposed of confidentially in compliance with the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth);*
iv. A confidential *Register of Incidents* will be maintained by the Dean or nominee to support governance oversight and reporting to the Governing Council.

6. Review of the Mental Health, Wellbeing and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Strategy

a) The Institute will evaluate the mental health, wellbeing, sexual assault, and harassment issues through feedback and surveys.
b) The Institute will update resources and support services timely to meet the current regulations.
c) The Dean will oversee the development and implementation of this Plan.
d) The Dean will regularly report the incidents to the Governing Council.
e) The Council will monitor these reports and provide strategic direction aligned with the Institute's policies and objectives.
f) Regular reviews and assessments of the prevention strategy are conducted to measure effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. This ongoing evaluation process includes benchmarking against industry standards and soliciting feedback from stakeholders to enhance the overall wellbeing and safety of the Institute's community.
g) The Council holds responsibility for approving and authorising any strategy related to this Plan.

7. Investigation, Resolution, and Protection from Retaliation

The investigation of any reported issues will be conducted by the Dean or nominee in collaboration with the Student Support Manager. Where the matter relates to the Dean, the investigation will be conducted under the authority of the Chair of the Governing Council. All reported incidents of sexual harassment or sexual assault will be fairly processed within a specified timeframe. The Institute is committed to taking disciplinary action and implementing appropriate consequences based on findings of investigations. The Institute recognises that breaches of this Policy may also trigger enforcement action under the *National Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence (2025)* and relevant Work Health and Safety legislation which includes regulatory sanctions. Please refer to the *Student Code of Conduct*, *Staff Code of Conduct*, and *Human Resource Management Policy and Procedure* for detailed information on disciplinary processes, possible sanctions, and associated responsibilities.

The Institute prioritises the safety and justice of students and staff and will provide support services to victims for emotional comfort and guidance throughout the process. Please refer to the *Student Grievance Management Policy and Procedure* and *Human Resource Management Policy and Procedure* for procedural safeguards, appeal rights, and protections against victimisation.

If investigations uncover violations of the law, the Institute will cooperate with relevant authorities for further investigation and take necessary actions to against those responsible.

8. Appeals

Students and staff have the right to appeal any decision and penalty made under this Plan. If the student or staff is dissatisfied with the process or believes there has been an administrative error, they can appeal in accordance with the *Student Grievance Management Policy and Procedure* and *Human Resource Management Policy and Procedure* respectively.

9. Review and Evaluation

This Plan will be reviewed at least every two years, or earlier if required due to changes in legislation, regulatory requirements, technological developments within professional and industry sectors, or institutional priorities, to ensure its ongoing relevance, accuracy, and effectiveness.

Appendix A – Confidential Register of Incidents (Template)

This Register supports governance oversight, accurate record management, and timely reporting to the Governing Council. It is maintained and securely managed by the Dean in accordance with the *Records Management Policy and Procedure* and the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*, the *State Records Act 2000 (WA)*, and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992 (WA)* to ensure confidentiality, integrity, and responsible stewardship of information.

Date of Incident / Report	Type of Incident **(e.g., Mental Health Concern / Sexual Harassment / Other)**	Summary of Issue ***(Non-Identifiable)***	**Action Taken / Referral**	**Status / Outcome**	**Reported To**	**Date Reported to Governing Council**	**Notes *(Confidential Use Only***

Version Control

Version	Date of Approval	Approved By	Related Documents
1.2	15 April 2026	Governing Council	Academic Progression and Graduation Policy and Procedure Admission Policy and Procedure Assessment Policy and Procedure Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy and Procedure Delegations of Authority Policy and Procedure Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Procedure Fraud Prevention Policy and Procedure Human Resource Management Policy and Procedure Library Services and ICT Usage Policy and Procedure Records Management Policy and Procedure Risk Management Plan Staff Code of Conduct Student Code of Conduct Student Grievance Management Policy and Procedure Institute Health and Safety Policy and Procedure
Benchmarking Institutions			Griffith University Deakin University The University of Adelaide The University of Sydney The University of New South Wales Macquarie University Melbourne Institute of Technology
Policy Owner			Dean
Legislations			Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth) (HESF 2021) Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth) (ESOS Act) National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Cth) (National Code) Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (Cth) (TEQSA Act) Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA) Freedom of Information Act 1992 (WA) Higher Education Action Plan Addressing Gender-Based Violence (2024–2026) Mental Health Act 2014 (WA) National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022–2032 Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (WA)

	Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022 (WA) Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022 (WA) Criminal Code Act Compilation Act 1913 (WA) Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) State Records Act 2000 (WA) Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth) Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 (Cth) Universities Accord (National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence) Act 2025 (Cth) Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth)	Standard 2.3; Standard 2.4; Standard 6.2.