

# Student Welfare Policy

Version 1.1 | Date: July 2025

Approved by: RTO Manager and Compliance consultant

---

## 1. Purpose

This policy outlines VASS College's commitment to promoting and maintaining the **health, safety, wellbeing, and personal development** of all students, supporting their educational success. It ensures compliance with the **Standards for RTOs 2025 (SRTOs)**, including obligations around student welfare and cultural safety (e.g., Standard 2.5), and the **Skills First 2024–25 V3.0** contract, including obligations related to student support and equity funding.

*(References: SRTOs 2025 Quality Outcome 2; Skills First V3.0 VET Funding Contract – Student support obligations, inclusive delivery provisions.)*

---

## 2. Scope

Applies to all **students enrolled** at VASS College—across accredited programs (Community Services, Mental Health, Education Support, Early Childhood, EAL)—and all **staff and third parties** responsible for supporting student welfare.

*(References: SRTOs 2025 student cohort obligations; Skills First V3.0 – inclusive and accessible support requirements.)*

---

### 2A. Definitions

- **Wellbeing Needs** – Physical, emotional, social, cultural, and mental health needs that may impact a student's capacity to study. *(SRTOs 2025 requirement to identify cohort needs.)*
- **Critical Incident** – Any event that significantly impacts student safety or wellbeing (e.g., serious injury, mental health crisis, violence, or other emergencies).
- **Wellbeing Risk Escalation Process** – A defined sequence of steps to support students in distress, from early identification through referral and follow-up.
- **Cultural Safety** – An environment that is respectful and inclusive of cultural differences, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners. *(SRTOs 2025 Quality Outcome 2)*
- **Intervention Strategy** – A formal plan to provide tailored support (internal or external) for at-risk students.

### 3. Guiding Principles

VASS College is committed to:

- Supporting students holistically—academically, personally, mentally, and emotionally.
- Providing a safe, inclusive, respectful, and culturally safe learning environment. (*SRTOs 2025 Quality Outcome 2*)
- Ensuring students know their rights, responsibilities, and available supports.
- Encouraging early identification of difficulties and providing timely, appropriate interventions.
- Respecting student privacy and confidentiality under the **Privacy Act 1988** and VASS College Privacy Policy.
- Clear, ongoing communication with students.

---

### 4. Key Areas of Student Welfare Support

#### 4.1. Physical and Emotional Wellbeing

- Access to first aid and mental health—first-aid trained staff.
- Recognition of distress signs by staff and appropriate response/referral.

#### 4.2. Learning Support

- Tutorials, tailored learning resources, trainer consultations.
- Initial and ongoing LLN assessments and support.
- Monitoring welfare processes to assess effectiveness.

#### 4.3. Cultural Safety and Inclusion

- Promotion of diversity, inclusion, and cultural respect across all programs.
- Specific supports for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, migrants, and learners with disabilities. (*SRTOs 2025 Quality Outcome 2, Skills First inclusive obligations.*)

#### 4.4. Bullying, Discrimination, and Harassment

- Zero tolerance for harassment or discrimination.
- Access to confidential grievance and complaints procedures.

#### 4.5. Work Placement and Safety

- Brief students about workplace safety, rights, and expectations.
- Ensure host organisations meet **WHS requirements** and supervise placements appropriately.

#### 4.6. Student Engagement and Voice

- Feedback via surveys, forums, meetings.
- Use feedback to enhance welfare and learning supports. (*Skills First feedback loop provisions.*)

#### 4.7. External Referrals

- Partnerships with health, housing, financial, and social service providers.
- Referral pathways when needs exceed internal capacity.

#### 4.8. Critical Incident Management Registry

- Record and respond to serious incidents affecting student welfare.
- Document investigations, actions taken, and follow-up support.

#### 4.9. Intervention Strategies & Wellbeing Risk Escalation Process

- Tailored support plans for students identified as being at academic or personal risk.: e.g., adjusted learning, counselling referrals, check-ins.
- **Escalation Flow:**
  1. Identify early signs → 2. Initial internal support → 3. If unresolved, escalate to Student Support Officer → 4. Refer to external services or escalate to management as needed → 5. Document and follow up.

### 5. Responsibilities

Stakeholder	Responsibility
Students	Engage respectfully, seek support, comply with policies.
Trainers/Assessors	Identify welfare concerns, offer initial support, refer when needed.
Student Support Officers	Coordinate welfare services, maintain referral pathways, monitor support plans.
RTO Management	Ensure resources, training, and systems are in place to support student welfare.

(Implicitly aligned with SRTOs 2025 emphasis on staff capability and organisational support structures.)

### 6. Confidentiality and Privacy

- All welfare matters are kept strictly confidential.

- Student data handled in line with the **Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)** and relevant VASS College policies.

*(Supports both SRTOs privacy obligations and Skills First student data provisions.)*

## 7. Continuous Improvement

- Annual policy review, or sooner following legislative changes or critical incidents.
- Updates reflect SRTOs, Skills First, regulatory changes, or feedback outcomes.

## 8. Contact for Student Welfare Support

### Student Support Services

[Insert contact details]

## Appendix – Skills First Compliance Mapping Table

Policy Section	Skills First V3.0 Obligations	Notes
1. Purpose	Inclusive delivery, funding contract support	Sets intent and compliance alignment.
2. Scope	Inclusive student coverage	Covers all enrolled students and staff involved in welfare.
2A. Definitions	—	Clarity for key terminology used in compliance.
3. Guiding Principles	Inclusive & equitable training mandates	Reflects inclusive, equitable, and student-focused obligations.
4.1–4.9 Key Support Areas	Duties to support students, incident response	Covers holistic welfare and early intervention strategies.
4.9 Wellbeing Escalation Flow	Incident management expectations	Demonstrates proactivity and clear escalation and referral process.
5. Responsibilities	Student support infrastructure requirements	Aligns with staff roles and organisational obligations.
6. Confidentiality and Privacy	Student data handling and privacy practices	Meets legal and contractual privacy requirements.

<b>Policy Section</b>	<b>Skills First V3.0 Obligations</b>	<b>Notes</b>
7. Continuous Improvement	Policy governance demands in contract	Ensures policy stays current and responsive.

\*\* Standard 4.2 from SRTOs 2025 requires staff to be informed and supported in their roles.

#### Appendix – Mapping to SRTOs 2025 Clauses

<b>Process Step</b>	<b>Relevant SRTOs 2025 Clause(s)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Trainer/Assessor observes wellbeing concern	Clause 1.5 – Support services for learners	Includes academic, wellbeing, and language/literacy/numeracy support obligations.
Immediate safety or wellbeing risk identified	Clause 2.1 – Compliance with legislation; Clause 1.5	Encompasses WHS and duty of care responsibilities.
Initial discussion with learner and internal referral	Clause 1.5	Requires clear referral pathways and documented learner support.
Escalation to Wellbeing Officer or Designated Staff	Clause 2.1; Clause 1.5	Ensures escalation is documented and managed by a responsible person.
External referral to specialist services	Clause 1.5; Clause 2.1	For cases beyond RTO capacity; must align with privacy and confidentiality legislation.
Documentation and record-keeping	Clause 8.5 – Retention of records	Applies to student support and incident documentation.
Review and continuous improvement	Clause 2.2 – Continuous improvement	Ensures feedback from incidents informs policy and practice updates.