General Policy G10 Pastoral Policy and Procedure

1. Policy Statement

This Pastoral Support Policy:

- Emphasises the role of the Student Experience Team in relation to pastoral support as well as an institution-wide approach;
- Promotes seeking out professional medical advice and guidance;
- Promotes fairness in opportunities for students with different learning needs;
- Provides guidelines for addressing students additional needs fairly and efficiently.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a standardised approach to the provision of pastoral support with consistent quality and efficiency for students in all SAE Institute UK campuses offering validating partner awards, and programmes feeding into validating partner awards. To achieve this, the policy supports a multiple stage process for effective pastoral support, namely:

- Identification of student needs;
- Directing students to the best source of professional help;
- Monitoring and improvement of student support.

The purpose of a Student Experience Officer (SEO) is to ensure that students can focus on their learning and minimise distractions due to disability, learning difficulties, health and other pastoral issues during their studies at SAE Institute UK. The role should enhance student academic progress and achievement, focusing on student retention and widening participation. The SEO works to maximise student potential to the benefit of the student's overall experience within a HE environment, working with the student to reach their academic potential on the programme. The SEO also provides guidance on enhancing employability upon graduation.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all modules and courses of SAE Institute UK. Student Support at SAE Institute UK is divided into 3 areas; Academic Support, Financial Support and Pastoral Support. Each campus will have one at least one Student Experience Officer, the typical roles include;

- Lead Student Experience Officer (Support and oversight across all categories; London campus only);
- Academic Student Experience Officer (Academic Administration Support)

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- Learning Support Student Experience Officer (Classroom Support/ Academic Support);
  - Financial Student Experience Officer (Financial Support).

Initially the Student Experience Team should be the first point of contact for students in need of support, and should, in consultation and consent with the student, identify appropriate follow-up professional support and guidance.

Other key staff in relation to this policy and its implementation includes;

- Programme Coordinator;
- Academic Coordinator;
- Student Experience Manager;
- Learning and Quality Manager;
- Campus Director;
- Dean

4. Student Experience Team (SET)

The role of the Student Experience Team

Each campus has at least one dedicated member of staff appointed as a Student Experience Officer. They are responsible for face-to-face support and maintaining a local knowledge base and standards in pastoral support and for effective implementation of this policy in a local context.

In addition to the local campus SET, the Student Experience Manager (SEM) will coordinate all SET services between campuses. The SEM will have general responsibility for:

- Strategic planning of the approach to student experience and mental health across the institution;
- The development of guides and procedures for handling emergencies with distressed students;
- Developing relationships with organisations to support a range of student wellbeing needs;
- Implement training and awareness courses at SAE Institute, in particular for Student Experience Officers.

The SET will:

- Provide advice and guidance for contacting external professional help;
- Create relationships with local pastoral support providers, including strategic links with the NHS and local authorities;
- Monitor progress and changes in student need;

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- Maintain current knowledge of local legislation and working practices in supporting students, as well as policies and procedures from SAE.

5. Policy

Identification of Needs

The Student Experience ensure that all students prior to enrolment have clearly available information about the support available to them, as well as a simple, confidential channel for making their needs known to SAE Institute. This information and registration procedure should be as easily available to existing students. Students who disclose needs after enrolment will be supported by the Student Experience Team in the same manner.

This process should:

- Conform to all quality-related requirements, rules, policies and processes developed by SAE Institute UK and the validating partner University;
- Meet the needs of a diverse student profile;
- Address relevant national, professional and industry standards.

Acknowledgement of Disability

- For students to benefit from certain kinds of academic help and concessions, diagnosis and proof of needs from an authorised professional may be required at the discretion of the Academic Coordinator and Student Experience Officer e.g. time extension for exams, presenting alone etc;
- Students with disabilities are encouraged to apply for Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) for specific financial support towards learning needs.

Responsibilities of the Student Experience Team and Academic Faculty

- To assist students in finding the best pathway for maximising their potential to benefit from the student experience, reach their academic potential and enhance employability on graduation;
- To ensure that the campus has up-to-date information on local and SAE policy/legislation regarding support for students with learning and mental health difficulties.

Responsibilities of the Student

- To notify the Student Experience Team of any concerns, challenges or difficulties with their pastoral wellbeing;

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- To provide supporting evidence where possible for specific claims of learning and medical difficulties;
- To inform the SET of any changes in their needs and/or condition;
- To follow any action plan agreed on and fulfil any agreed commitments in the Student Support Plan.

- To seek out professional medical advice and guidance in relation to their pastoral support.

Follow-up and Continuous Support

An individual support plan for each student with a declared disability or condition should be outlined and agreed during the first meeting between the student and SET.

Support for students may include:

- Regular one-to-one sessions;
- In-class support where appropriate;
- Help with study skills;
- Providing learning resources in advance;
- Providing learning resources in alternative formats;
- Incorporating inclusive learning strategies;
- Scheduling classes in rooms that are appropriate to the student's needs;
- Alerting teachers to student needs in terms of teaching and learning materials;
- Permitting necessary breaks;
- Permitting the use of assistive technology for the purpose of learning activities;
- Permitting the assistance of an independent disability support worker, e.g. sign interpreter, reader, note taker, or mobility support assistant.

Full details of the support that the SET can offer will be outlined in the completed Student Support Plan document, which will be agreed by the relevant parties.

6. Limits of Pastoral Support

The SET provides information, advice and guidance, however, if a student is seeking medical advice then the SET will facilitate, within reason, in making arrangements to see that the student is supported by trained medical professionals. While the SET have a responsibility for supporting students, they are not expected to provide specialist pastoral care or give medical advice and should not attempt to do so.

Consequently, in cases where a student appears to be experiencing severe distress (e.g. serious physical or mental health problems), they will be encouraged to seek the appropriate medical professional help.

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It may occasionally be necessary for the Student Experience Officer to set boundaries and where a student is reluctant to seek out the necessary professional help, the Campus Director will be notified to provide guidance and any necessary further steps.

In the event of a student requiring pastoral care, the SET will recommend the student speaks to their GP in the first instance. The SET, with permission from the student, will work with the individual to support any recommended measures. Each campus should have a list of local providers of professional counselling providers which is regularly maintained. This list should include guidelines as to the appropriateness of each provider for different wellbeing needs.

6.1 Confidentiality

Whilst SAE will strive to keep all student information and disclosures confidential, we cannot guarantee one to one confidentiality if the student discloses information which puts themselves or others at risk, or is classed as illegal conduct. In some cases, we may be required to refer the disclosure to a third party, such as your emergency contact, an external professional or medical emergency service, or to another member of staff within the Institute. This is for the safety, protection and wellbeing of both the student and staff member.

Upon enrolment at SAE Institute, you will be asked to provide an emergency contact for such circumstances. This can be changed at any time by editing your student profile or notifying a member of the Student Experience Team.

6.2 Togetherall

SAE partners with Togetherall to offer further mental health and wellbeing support to students. Togetherall is an anonymised 24/7 online global community where students can receive peer support and guidance, moderated by trained mental health professionals, as well as access a wide range of self-resilience building courses. Students can access the service free of charge via https://togetherall.com/en-gb/ and use their email address to register/ log in.

7. Suicide Prevention

SAE is committed to promoting healthy mental health wellbeing. As such, SAE will promote and adhere to guidance by Universities UK and Papyrus, the UK's national charity dedicated to the prevention of young suicide, to ensure we have appropriate measures in place to support students highlighted as at risk.

SAE operates a prevention, intervention and postvention approach to suicide in students.

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For **prevention**, this includes, but is not limited to;

- Promoting mental health and wellbeing;
- Providing professional medical advice material on site in easily accessible locations, such as common rooms or reception;
- Promoting an honest, open and supportive environment for students.

For **intervention**, this includes, but is not limited to;

- Further development of a warning system using our internal systems to better track students at risk;
- Promoting professional public guidance within all of our UK campuses;
- Providing staff training in identifying early signs of potential suicide cases.

For **postvention**, this includes, but is not limited to;

- Contacting the bereaved and providing support to families via one to one support either in person, by phone or by email communications;
- Providing those affected, including additional students, with external stakeholder support from medical professionals;
- Ensuring staff are also supported by arranging for medical support from mental health professionals.

Guidance for staff

Following disclosure of suicidal thoughts or action, the Campus Director should be notified immediately in the first instance who will provide information on the next steps to follow. If deemed necessary, the SET should also seek immediate professional medical advice from local or emergency services.

8. Associated Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- A01 Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Policy;
- A07 Academic Grievance Policy;
- G03 Equal Opportunity, Disability and Inclusion Policy;
- G04 Student Engagement Policy;
- G06 Non-Academic Grievance Policy;
- SAE Quality Manual.

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9. Resources

Papyrus - Prevention of Young Suicide - Papyrus UK
Togetherall – https://togetherall.co/en-gb/
MIND – https://www.mind.org.uk
Samaritans – https://www.samaritans.org
NHS Mental Health – https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/

10. Further Information

Papyrus: Prevention of Young Suicide. (2018) *Help and Advice Resources,* Available via: https://papyrus-uk.org/help-advice-resources/

Rethink.org. (2018) *How you can help*. London: Rethink Mental Illness.

Policy History

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