



**Nepean Community College**

**Student Wellbeing Policy**

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## 1. Scope

This policy applies to all campuses of Nepean Community College.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is as follows:

1. To foster and sustain a safe, inclusive, and empowering environment.
2. To protect the rights and responsibilities of students.
3. To prioritise the health, safety and wellbeing of all students.
4. To ensure that the principles of equity and justice are embedded in all college plans, programs, and procedures.
5. To ensure that all staff and students are fully informed of relevant regulations and their responsibilities concerning student wellbeing.

## 3. Policy Statement

Nepean Community College is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO ID1223) dedicated to supporting young people with diverse needs. Nepean Community College focuses on three core pillars of **Safe | Inclusive | Empowering**.

Through these pillars, Nepean Community College aims to be a place where students feel secure and can proactively pursue their education while receiving support for their unique needs.

## 4. Student Rights and Responsibilities

At Nepean Community College:

• <b>Students have the Right to:</b>	• <b>Students have the Responsibility to:</b>
• Inclusion and acceptance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Respect others' rights</li><li>• Show consideration, kindness, and acceptance</li><li>• Act positively toward others and appreciate diversity</li><li>• Report any breaches of student rights</li></ul>
• Respectful and fair treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Treat others with respect and courtesy</li><li>• Contribute positively to the experiences of staff and students</li><li>• Be honest and fair in interactions</li></ul>
• Personal safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoid actions that could endanger themselves or others</li><li>• Notify staff if any safety risks arise at college</li></ul>
• Property safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoid stealing, damaging, or misusing others' property, including college property</li><li>• Seek permission before using another's belongings</li></ul>
• Quality education and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cooperate with reasonable staff requests</li><li>• Participate respectfully in classes</li><li>• Keep up with provided learning opportunities</li><li>• Attend college regularly</li><li>• Request additional support as required</li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and wellbeing protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play a responsible role in the management of personal health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Recognise and fulfill personal needs for safety and health</li> <li>• Seek support within and outside Nepean Community College for wellbeing and health needs</li> <li>• Remain open to feedback and suggestions for additional support</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean and well-maintained environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect and maintain college property.</li> <li>• Keep the environment clean and organised.</li> <li>• Take pride in the learning space and help maintain its cleanliness.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be proud of Nepean Community College community to which they belong</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibit positive and mature behaviour within and outside college</li> <li>• Uphold college values both on and off-campus</li> <li>• Represent Nepean Community College well in all extracurricular activities, such as work experience and excursions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To make personal choices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make responsible choices</li> <li>• Take accountability for choices that affect others</li> <li>• Accept feedback and any consequences when choices impact others negatively</li> </ul>

## 5. Harassment, Discrimination, and Bullying

All students of Nepean Community College are informed of Nepean Community Colleges' strong position against harassment, discrimination, and bullying.

Students are regularly provided learning opportunities about their rights and responsibilities in relation to this position through various means, including:

- orientation sessions
- Student Handbook
- informative events
- routine assemblies
- individual or small group discussions.

Each student has the right to expect a college day free from harassment, discrimination, and bullying.

Nepean Community Colleges' policy on these matters extends to incidents of cyberbullying that may occur both on and off college grounds, as well as during non-college hours, provided there is clear evidence of the online behaviour impacting Nepean Community College environment.

Students who engage in harassment, discrimination, or bullying of others may face a review of their placements, including time-out or possible withdrawal (refer to *Student Management Policy*).

Examples of harassment, discrimination, and bullying include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal: such as persistent name-calling, teasing, threats, derogatory language, and ongoing rudeness.
- Physical: including actions such as hitting, spitting, tripping, or using one's physical presence to intimidate.

- Social or psychological: such as repeated exclusion, alienation, spreading rumours, giving hostile looks, and sending malicious digital messages via texts or social media.

## 6. Staff Responsibilities in Relation to Harassment, Discrimination, and Bullying.

The **CEO** is Nepean Community College's **Student Wellbeing Officer** and has the responsibility to:

- foster a positive atmosphere of respect
- implement programs to strengthen college connections and reduce harassment, discrimination and bullying
- reinforce Nepean Community College's commitment to student safety
- create early intervention strategies for at-risk students
- provide support for students affected by bullying, including former perpetrators
- empower the community to recognise and address harassment and bullying
- educate students on responsible bystander behaviour and reporting
- establish clear reporting procedures for incidents
- address reported incidents promptly and effectively
- offer support to students involved in incidents
- provide regular updates to parents about incident management, within legal limits.

**College staff** are responsible for:

- respecting and supporting students
- making reasonable adjustments for student wellbeing
- modelling and encouraging appropriate behaviour
- knowing college policies on safety and wellbeing
- intervening in disrespectful or unkind behaviour
- reporting harassment, discrimination, or bullying to the CEO promptly
- maintaining accurate records in the Student Management System.

## 7. Gender Identity and Inclusion

Nepean Community College fosters an inclusive environment that embraces, accepts, and celebrates students, irrespective of their gender identity or sexual orientation.

Nepean Community College is dedicated to a child-centred, family-inclusive, and culturally aware approach to supporting students who are gender-diverse. Our policies regarding harassment, discrimination, and bullying will be applied equitably and consistently to all students, regardless of their gender identity or sexuality.

Additionally, Nepean Community College will offer support to students and their families by:

- using the student's chosen name and pronouns in daily interactions, regardless of parental consent
- assisting the student in communicating their preferences to parents or caregivers
- collaborating with the student on options if they prefer parents not be informed, such as having the CEO speak on their behalf
- documenting valid reasons for not disclosing preferences to parents, like safety concerns
- using the birth name and pronouns with parents when necessary to respect their understanding
- updating official records only with parental knowledge and consent
- providing accommodations to support student wellbeing, such as access to affirming bathrooms
- issuing documentation that includes both the birth name and preferred name when possible
- maintaining ongoing discussions with students to ensure their preferences are current.

## 8. Concerns for Student Wellbeing

If a staff member has concerns regarding a student's wellbeing or safety, they must promptly raise the issue with the CEO. Whenever possible, the staff member should inform the student about the necessity of sharing this information with the CEO and involve the student in the process.

If the concerns may require a Mandatory Report or a Duty of Care call, staff members must relay this information to the CEO, regardless of the student's wishes. Upon receiving this information, the CEO will collaborate to determine the appropriate course of action, which may include, but is not limited to:

- making a Duty of Care call to parents or caregivers
- sending the student home for the day, with parental acknowledgement
- completing a College Safety Plan or Individual Support Plan
- relocating other students from the area to facilitate support for the affected student.

In cases where concerns constitute a possible Mandatory Report, the CEO will adhere to the process map for Reporting Significant Risk of Harm (refer to **Child Protection and WWCC Policy**).

Where suitable, the CEO will update staff on any pertinent details, outcomes, and support measures following the reporting of concerns regarding student wellbeing.

## 9. Student Referral to External Agencies

While CEOs possess the knowledge and skills to provide guidance and support to students concerning wellbeing issues, there may be occasions when a more specialised intervention is necessary. In such cases, students may be referred to external agencies for support on issues including, but not limited to:

- homelessness or housing challenges
- financial issues, such as Centrelink payments
- mental health concerns
- sexual health matters
- substance use, including drugs and alcohol
- family and relationship issues.

If the CEO believes that a referral to an external agency would be beneficial, they will engage and consult with the student. CEOs are responsible for empowering students to take an active role in managing their health and wellbeing; therefore, no referrals will be made without the student's consultation and consent.

If a student opts out of external support, CEOs may continue to provide information and guidance until the student feels ready to accept a referral. When necessary, CEOs will involve parents or caregivers in the referral process.

## 10. Information Sharing with Parents and Caregivers

The parents or caregivers listed in the contact information on the student application are recognised as the custodial parent(s). If there are legal reasons preventing information from being shared with specific individuals in the student's life, these will be documented and adhered to.

If a non-custodial parent enquires about a student and there are no legal barriers to sharing information, the CEO or designated staff member may verbally provide attendance details and summaries of learning progress only. This information can also be given in writing if requested. Any information concerning a student's wellbeing will only be disclosed to a non-custodial parent with the student's permission.

Custodial parents and caregivers are responsible for notifying Nepean Community College of any changes to custodial arrangements and for informing Nepean Community College of individuals who are legally prohibited from accessing information regarding the student.

## 11. Reasonable Adjustment Plans

As Nepean Community College operates as a Registered Training Organisation, it is a part of the model that all students are entitled to have a Reasonable Adjustment Plan. The Reasonable Adjustment Plan is developed collaboratively between the student and designated college staff. Nepean Community College will then provide parents and caregivers with the opportunity to engage in consultation and contribute to the Reasonable Adjustment Plan.

A Reasonable Adjustment Plan will address the learning and wellbeing needs of students, including:

- identifying individual learning and support needs
- evaluating the functional impact of both diagnosed and presumed learning and wellbeing needs
- recognising strengths and challenges
- specifying reasonable adjustments necessary to best support the student in Nepean Community College environment
- setting achievable goals.

Reasonable Adjustment Plans will be reviewed and updated as needed during specified periods throughout the year, with parents invited for consultation on each occasion.

## 12. Student Medical Disclosure and Medication

As part of the enrolment process, students must disclose any medical diagnoses and the related medications they are taking. This information will be securely stored and utilised to support the student's wellbeing.

If a student discloses a physical, mental, or learning diagnosis, they must provide supporting documentation. This evidence must be updated upon request from Nepean Community College or whenever a new diagnosis occurs. Acceptable forms of evidence may include:

- letters from general practitioners (GP)
- letters from psychologists
- reports from college psychologists
- reports from psychiatrists.

If a student has a health plan related to their diagnosis, it must be provided to Nepean Community College at the time of enrolment or as soon as it is received. Examples of health care plans include:

- asthma action plans
- anaphylaxis management plans
- diabetes management plans
- epilepsy management plans
- support plans for eating disorder.

If a student's health condition could potentially impact their safety or the safety of others on campus, Nepean Community College may opt to create a Risk Management Plan. This plan will be developed collaboratively with the student and their parents or caregivers and will provide guidance to staff on how best to support the student when their health may pose a safety risk.

If a student needs to take medication, **Nepean Community College expects that:**

- the student or parent/caregiver will inform Nepean Community College of any changes in medication
- the student will use the medication for its intended purpose
- the student or parent/caregiver will notify Nepean Community College if medication is needed during college hours
- the student will not share their medication with other students.

**Staff members cannot:**

- supervise or administer prescribed medication, unless there is an identified reason to do so. This must be documented in the Student Management System and a medication management plan created, approved by the CEO and authorised by the parents
- provide headache or pain relief medications.

A student who refuses to take prescribed medication, thereby affecting their own ability to learn or disrupting the learning environment for others, may be subject to a review of their placement.

### **13. Exemption from College: Potential Harm to Self or Others**

Nepean Community College supports a diverse student population, including many who face mental health challenges and other vulnerabilities related to wellbeing. As such, Nepean Community College places significant importance on ensuring the psychological safety of all students.

If a student is assessed as being at risk of physically or psychologically harming others, or if they are unable to maintain their own safety on campus, they may be requested to take a leave of absence until an individual support plan can be developed or reviewed. The creation and review of such a plan will involve collaboration between the student, their parent or caregiver, and the CEO.

A student may be placed on leave under circumstances including, but not limited to:

- disclosure to staff of thoughts of self-harm or harm to others
- disclosure to staff of an intention to self-harm on campus
- disclosure to staff of suicidal thoughts or previous attempts
- engaging in risk taking behaviours on campus, such as using sharp objects to scratch or cut oneself, behaving dangerously near roads, or using hot items to inflict burns, e.g., glue guns or kettles
- involving peers in self-harm or suicidal thoughts, such as sharing messages or images of self-harm
- threatening harm to another individual, whether in person or via social media
- using self-harm or suicidal threats as a means of manipulation in peer relationships.

In the event of an acute mental health emergency on campus, staff will follow the established risk management protocols. If a student continues to struggle with maintaining their safety on campus despite being offered support and adjustments, Nepean Community College reserves the right to implement a work-from-home plan, extended leave, or an attendance plan.

When necessary for the safety of all students and staff, Nepean Community College reserves the right to withdraw the student's placement.

### **14. Application for Funding Assistance for Students with special Needs**

As a Registered Training Organisation, Nepean Community College may pursue additional funding to support the diverse needs of its students. This funding can include community or government grants, specific funding opportunities, or government allocations through the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)

For individual students, funding may be sought through scholarship applications from various sources, including, the Department of Communities and Justice and other government or philanthropic opportunities.

Students who meet scholarship criteria will be consulted prior to any application submission.

The application process may require Nepean Community College to gather contributions or additional information from families, caregivers, other college staff, or community members. Throughout this process, the student will be consulted to ensure their voice is included.

### **15. The Role of Student Wellbeing Officer in Overall Student Wellbeing**

The Student Wellbeing Officer (SWO) is responsible for supporting student wellbeing in the educational environment, advocating for students, and maintaining confidentiality. In collaboration with other staff



members, SWOs will work to establish robust support systems that facilitate optimal outcomes for students.

The SWO is not the primary case manager for students in matters that fall outside of the educational context. The SWO may be a part of a Case Management Plan for a student with complex needs, however, they remain focussed on working with the student and college to create and implement strategies to reduce barriers to accessing learning.

***The SWO's responsibilities include:***

- monitoring student wellbeing and implement strategies to reduce learning barriers
- collecting and maintaining documentation supporting student needs (e.g., diagnosis letters, assessments)
- communicating wellbeing needs and strategies to all staff through daily updates and weekly meetings
- upholding professional standards regarding safety, child protection, and confidentiality
- ensuring compliance with Mandatory Reporting requirements
- maintaining accurate contact notes
- referring students to external agencies with their input
- advocating for students on wellbeing and disciplinary issues
- informing staff about professional development opportunities in student wellbeing
- supporting staff in connecting with new students by sharing relevant needs

**16. The Responsibilities of Other College Staff in Relation to Overall Student Wellbeing**

All Community College staff share the responsibility of supporting student wellbeing. Each staff member plays a role in advancing students' progression through the three core pillars and is expected to make reasonable adjustments to meet individual student needs.

***CEO***

The CEO has the responsibility to:

- oversee the functions of all college staff
- make decisions grounded in best practice knowledge, incorporating staff and student feedback
- provide staff with professional development opportunities
- collaborate with relevant stakeholders on policies and procedures related to student wellbeing and safety
- work with the HoC and SWO regarding campus needs
- seek funding opportunities to ensure campuses have adequate resources and supplies
- ensuring Nepean Community College complies with Disability Standards in Education, and all legislative requirements including Mandatory Reporting, Duty of Care and Reportable Conduct.

***RTO Compliance & Quality Assurance Manager***

The RTO Compliance & Quality Assurance Manager has the responsibility to:

- oversee the implementation of campus-level policies and procedures
- support and lead staff in fostering a positive learning environment
- monitor programs and assessments to ensure appropriate adjustments for individual student needs
- encourage reflective practices among staff to support student needs, including the coordination of appropriate Professional Learning opportunities
- collaborate with the SWO on student matters
- engage with parents and caregivers to support students effectively.

***Teachers and Learning Support Officers***

Teaching and learning support staff have the responsibility to:

- provide quality learning experiences
- make reasonable adjustments for individual student needs
- reinforce college expectations on harassment, discrimination, and bullying
- foster positive relationships with students in and out of the classroom
- relay relevant information to the HoC and/or SWO
- follow procedures for suspected significant risk of harm
- log adjustments that are not included in the students' IEP regularly
- creatively meet learning outcomes to support diverse student needs
- communicate effective learning support strategies to all staff.

## 17. Definitions

<b>Duty of Care</b>	The obligation to take reasonable measures to ensure the safety of young people under Nepean Community College's supervision
<b>Mandatory Report</b>	The legislative duty to report significant harm risks to relevant government authorities
<b>Risk of Significant Harm</b>	Concern for a young person's safety that requires a statutory authority's intervention
<b>SWO</b>	Student Wellbeing Officer
<b>Time-Out</b>	A period of time away from Nepean Community College to reflect on actions
<b>Withdrawal</b>	Termination of Enrolment

## 18. Governance

<b>Related Legislation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education Act (1990)</li> <li>• Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)</li> <li>• Child Protection (Working With Children) Act 2012 (NSW)</li> <li>• Children's Guardian Act 2019</li> <li>• Anti-Discrimination Act 1977</li> <li>• Disability Discrimination Act 1992</li> <li>• Disability Standards in Education 2005</li> <li>• Racial Hatred Act 1995</li> <li>• Racial Discrimination Act 1975</li> </ul>
<b>Approval Authority</b>	
<b>Policy Owner</b>	CEO
<b>Policy Panel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEO</li> <li>• RTO Compliance &amp; Quality Assurance Manager</li> <li>• Student Wellbeing Officer</li> </ul>
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