

Student Welfare Support Policy

1. Policy Statement

Academic Bridge Ltd is committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all students. We recognise that student welfare is fundamental to academic success and personal development. Our welfare support services aim to ensure that every learner has access to guidance, resources, and assistance for their academic, emotional, and social needs.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All registered students of Academic Bridge Ltd
- All staff members, contractors, and agents representing the school
- All on-campus, online, and off-site school-related activities

3. Objectives

- Promote the well-being, safety, and inclusion of all students.
- Provide confidential and accessible welfare support services.
- Ensure all students are aware of their rights and responsibilities.
- Support students in times of difficulty, both academically and personally.
- Maintain compliance with relevant Irish legislation and QQI standards.

4. Welfare Support Services

Academic Bridge Ltd will provide:

1. **Designated Student Welfare Officer (SWO)** – A trained staff member available for guidance and assistance.
2. **Orientation Programme** – Covering local life in Ireland, health services, cultural adaptation, safety, and academic expectations.
3. **Pastoral Care** – Ongoing check-ins, one-to-one meetings, and group

4. **Mental Health Support** – Referral to qualified counsellors, mental health organisations, and emergency support lines.
5. **Academic Support** – Study skills workshops, English language learning resources.
6. **Integration Activities** – Social, cultural, and community events to support student belonging and cultural exchange.
7. **Accommodation Support** – Guidance on finding safe housing and addressing issues with landlords or host families.

5. Confidentiality

- Student records will be kept secure in compliance with **GDPR**.

6. Health & Safety

- The school will maintain a safe learning environment in line with the **Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005**.
- Emergency contact numbers will be made available to all students.
- First aid kits and trained first aid personnel will be available on campus.

7. Equality & Inclusion

- The school is committed to equal opportunity and prohibits discrimination under the **Equal Status Acts 2000–2018**.
- Support will be tailored to meet the needs of students with disabilities or special requirements.
- Cultural awareness training will be provided to staff to ensure respectful and inclusive engagement.

8. Reporting & Feedback

- Students can report welfare concerns to the Student Welfare Officer in person, via email, or through the anonymous feedback form.
- All complaints will be handled in accordance with the school's **Grievance Policy**.

- Feedback will be used to improve welfare support services.

9. Emergency Support Contacts

Academic Bridge is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all students. All students are provided with a Student Handbook containing relevant emergency contact information for both campuses.

Internal Support

- **School Welfare Officer**

Available to provide support in relation to personal, academic, or welfare concerns.

External Emergency and Support Services

- **Local Garda Stations**

- Store Street Garda Station (serving the Gardiner campus)
- Kevin Street Garda Station (serving the Harcourt campus)

- **Medical Services (GP / Health Centres)**

Students are advised to access local GP services for medical assistance.
Administrative staff may assist students in locating appropriate services where necessary.

- **Mental Health Support**

- Health Service Executive (HSE) mental health services
- Samaritans helpline: **116 123** (24-hour confidential support)

- **Emergency Services**

- **112 or 999** (ambulance, police, and fire services)

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Welfare Officer and the Academic Bridge Ltd Management Team, with student feedback incorporated.