

BSC Education Pastoral Care Policy

*Review History:			
Date of review	Reviewed by	Reason for review	Amendments
May 2024	Compliance and Safeguarding Manager College Manager - York	Policy creation	N/A
October 2024		Annual review of policies	

**Policies will be reviewed annually or more frequently if there are any legal changes or as good practice requires.*

Introduction:

At BSC Education we recognise the unique challenges and experiences that international students and students living abroad may face while studying in one of our locations. Our pastoral care policy aims to provide comprehensive support and assistance to ensure the well-being, safety, and academic success of our international student community.

1.Objectives:

To create a welcoming and inclusive environment where students feel supported and valued.

To provide resources and assistance to help students adapt to a new cultural and educational environment.

To address the specific needs and challenges faced by international students, including language barriers, homesickness, cultural adjustment, and academic pressure.

To promote mental health and well-being among students and signpost to access to counselling and other support services.

To foster a sense of belonging and community among international students through social, cultural, and recreational activities.

To ensure that international students are aware of their rights, responsibilities, and available support services.

2. Pre-Arrival Support and Admissions

BSC Education provides information and resources to help students prepare for their arrival, including admissions support, accommodation options. Useful and specific information for coming to live in their chosen study location is provided via the BSC Education website.

BSC Educations admissions teams assist students with pre-arrival questions and concerns, with support from our wider organisation where needed.

1.2. Accommodation Assistance:



Assist international students in finding suitable accommodation options, including residential accommodation or homestay arrangements. Students at BSC education are informed and have additional guidance provided to them through QR codes and through MyBSC(GEL) platforms on information on private renting, including support and guidance on rental issues, landlord and tenant responsibilities and other housing/renting related issues.

2.2 MyBSC (GEL)

Once students book their course with BSC Education they are given access to MyBSC our guided e-learning platform where they can access their student handbook, information about living in the UK and other useful documents to prepare for their arrival in the UK.

3. Induction:

BSC Education offers a comprehensive and informative induction program specifically tailored to the needs of international students, covering topics such as academic expectations, attendance requirements, college facilities and support, health services, cultural adjustment and UK Law.

BSC induction provides opportunities for international students to connect with each other and with current students, faculty, and team members. They are also shown round their city, helpful tips, places to eat, banking and health facilities are also shown within the tour.

Every Tuesday after the student has completed their induction on their first day BSC Education provides 'tea and biscuits' which is an opportunity to enjoy some refreshments, talk to other students, team members and become immersed within the college culture at BSC.

4. Academic Support:

BSC Education provides academic support throughout a student's course. After completion of a placement test (either pre-arrival online or on the student's first morning) which assesses the student's level in terms of grammar, vocabulary and writing, their speaking skills are also assessed, and the best class and programme of study are discussed. From this, students are placed accordingly, with the understanding explained to them that they can always discuss changing to a more appropriate level or class with the College Manager, Lead Teacher or their class teachers. For example, if a student wishes to take an exam (IELTS, Cambridge, TOEFL etc.) we discuss with them the time frame and when it would be best to switch to specific exam-preparation classes and we can assist them with enrolling.

Students have an initial tutorial with the Lead Teacher/College Manager (and are asked to complete a feedback questionnaire) in their first two days in college and this is followed up by regular (monthly) tutorials, along with informal check ins.

On a day-to-day, lesson-by-lesson basis, attendance and punctuality is closely monitored and students arriving late or being absent are spoken to and followed up when they come in by the College management team to ensure support and guidance is provided where issues arise. BSC Education in conjunction with its safeguarding procedures raise any immediate concerns we have with absent students or with under 18 students who are more than 15 minutes late to college. Once this has been flagged by college or teaching teams, students are contacted to check their welfare.

When students are having issues with attendance and punctuality, BSC has systems in place to conduct informal chats about any problems or issues they might be facing and what BSC can do to help the student (assisting with transport options, helping with students who are living away from home and their families for the first time, speaking with a Mental Health First Aid trained colleague) then if issues persist there is a Stage 1 Written Warning, Stage 2 Formal Meeting and warning, Stage 3 Meeting and final warning Stage 4 which ultimately results in Expulsion, However, we aim to work with and support students to avoid issues arising and escalating. Stage 4 warnings are only issued in extreme circumstances and when all other options and support has been exhausted.

Students do weekly stop-and check progress tests, usually in the first lesson each Friday, and results are checked and discussed with teachers. When it is felt that a student might benefit from moving to a more (or more rarely a less) challenging class, this is discussed by the teacher with the College Manager and Lead Teacher, and then this is discussed/suggested to the student. Students can speak to academic teams and academic managers about any academic support they require. This can also be arranged in meeting slots to suit both the student and teams.

5. Health and Wellbeing Services:



BSC Education provides guidance and signposting to health and wellness services, including medical care, counselling, psychological support, and wellness program where requested.

Offer information and resources on maintaining physical and mental well-being, stress management, and coping strategies are readily available to students and also provided via our MyBSC platform.

Students are informed via their first day induction where to find local healthcare centres and pharmacies should they need support with their health and well-being, its also noted that students can also utilise NHS 111 services with translation services for those with lower levels of English. Student experience teams and wider college teams are always on hand to support students with these services.

5.1 Student well-being

Where students are identified as having problems or well-being concerns, there are a number of different actions available to support them, including student experience team support, mental health first aider support and signposting to other agencies.

College Managers, student experience teams and the compliance and safeguarding manager will work together to ensure that any student in need of additional support or advice receives it.

Students who are in need of a welfare plan will be monitored via a well-being log and actions plans discussed as a team and recorded appropriately and in line with GDPR. Where this concerns an Under 18's their parent, agent or group leader will be informed.

BSC Education is committed to proving mental health support to all who visit, study and work within our colleges. We have dedicated mental health first aiders most of which are available in each BSC location however this training is on-going. For colleges where, onsite mental health first aiders are not yet in post support can be provided by a range of our central support trained mental health first aiders.

6. Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation:

BSC Education will regularly assess the effectiveness of the pastoral care policy through feedback and anything reported relating to measures to improve student care and support.

BSC Education will update and improve the pastoral care services based on the feedback and evolving needs of the international student community.

7. Conclusion:

At BSC Education we are committed to providing comprehensive pastoral care and support to ensure the well-being, success, and happiness of our international students. By fostering a supportive and inclusive environment, we aim to empower international students to thrive academically, socially, and personally during their time with us.