Document	STUDENT SUPPORT POLICY
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AUTHOR

Name	Date
Latifa Adams	01 January 2010

RECORD OF CHANGES

Revision	Title or description	Entered by
02	Incorporated orientation programme	R Reid
03	Bi-Annual Review	T Petersen
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1. PREAMBLE

CTCFD - Cape Town College of Fashion Design (henceforth referred to as The Institution) understands the large number of reasons why the achievement of any one student can be adversely affected. The Institution is committed to identifying and addressing these barriers to learning and to supporting each student in achieving their full potential.

2. PURPOSE

The following aspects define the purpose of this policy:

2.1 GUIDELINES

To establish clear guidelines for the development and evaluation of programmes and services that will afford all students adequate academic, environmental and personal support, in the interests of ensuring that they have a fair chance of achieving academic success.

2.2 BENCHMARKS

To provide benchmarks to guide the planning, development, design and evaluation of learning support which will serve as a point of reference for all academic staff and enhance the quality of the learning experience.

2.3 LEARNING SYSTEM

To provide a fully aligned learning system through the alignment of learning support services with the purpose, outcomes, learning strategy and assessment criteria of the modules.

2.4 INNOVATION

To encourage new and innovative approaches to student support and development of programmes and services as required by the demands of an ever-changing environment.

3. POLICY STATEMENTS

- The Institution strives to create an enabling environment conducive to meaningful learning in which students from all backgrounds are supported by committed and suitably qualified staff. The Institution promotes an ethos of reciprocity, service and tolerance and is supportive of academically underprepared students, women, minorities, students from South African Development Community (SADC) countries, other international students, HIV-positive students, disabled students, mature or working/part-time students and other under-represented groups.
- The administration, communication, support services and curricula reflect and value diversity as far as possible and staff capacity and administrative infrastructure are

sufficient to cater for the number of enrolled students so as not to compromise the student's support and developmental needs.

- Students have sufficient access to technology to make it possible for them to succeed in the programme and information on student support services is made accessible to all students.
- Services are made available at the three important phases of a students' study path: on first entering the institution; to promote retention during students' stay; and to ease the move from higher education into the world of work.

4. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions have been adopted by The Institution and are taken from the Improving Teaching & Learning Resources, Resource No. 4: Student Development & Support (2004):

- Student Academic Development: refers to the curriculum strategies employed at the teaching and learning interface to enhance the quality of learning and the academic performance of students. In South Africa, 'student academic development' sometimes has the alternative meaning of 'academic development' or 'educational development', referring specifically to institutional responses to the needs of underprepared students. It is important to recognise that all of these terms most centrally refer to curriculum development (in its widest sense, including the design of content and forms of delivery and staff development). Student academic development therefore refers to both specific 'stand-alone' or 'add-on' or extended or enriched programmes (e.g. bridging, recruitment, preparation or foundation programmes aimed at the specific needs of a particular group of students), and curriculum development initiatives in the mainstream academic curriculum at all levels of higher education.

- Student Development: refers to those extra-curricular campus activities designed for quality of life and for personal and social development, such as leadership development; sport; gender support groups; and student political, cultural, religious and social societies; as well as appropriate forms of communication and support for off-campus students.

- Student Support: refers to those services that support students in their day-to-day lives on campus as well as those services that support them in their academic work. This includes, among others, services such as financial aid; bursary and loan schemes; residences; student counselling; library services and resources; IT provision; health services; support for students with HIV/AIDS, and so on.

5. STUDENT ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

5.1 STUDENT ORIENTATION

Student orientation takes place in the first week of first year, and thereafter on the first day of each academic year. The purpose of orientation is to introduce new students to their peers, the academic and support staff, to familiarise them with the access to and use and of facilities and to outline the relevant Policies, Procedures and Rules and Regulations.

Information on the learning programme, student support services and the teaching and learning philosophy adopted by The Institution is communicated verbally and in writing.

5.2   ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS

Sufficient academic support must be provided to students at entry level. The application interview is used to identify students who may be underprepared and appropriate recommendations for student development are made. The applicant may be recommended to:

- Register for one of the short skills courses offered by The Institution
- Register for an English Language course offered by a registered institution
- Contact a reputable career counsellor and revaluate his/ her career choice
- Enrol in a fashion design foundation programme offered by a registered institution

5.3   STUDENT MENTORSHIP

The academic staff must provide each student with the support required to perform academically, and encourage active engagement from the students through:

- Establishing a supportive relationship with all students
- Adopting a creative approach to teaching and learning
- Providing regular constructive assessment feedback
- Mentoring and coaching

Students may make an appointment to meet with any lecturer or the Academic Head to discuss their progress and request additional assistance with managing their workload or to ask for additional tutoring in an area where they may be struggling.

5.4   ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Students receive an Academic Report on a quarterly basis to assist them to monitor their progress and to identify any areas of concern.

Students also meet with the Academic Head and the relevant lecturers to discuss their progress. Recommendations for improvement are made and the feedback is minuted.

5.5   STUDENT AT RISK PROGRAMME

Student progress is monitored bi-weekly by the Quality Assurance Committee. Students who have a poor attendance record, or who have failing profiles are identified and are requested to meet with the Quality Assurance Manager or Academic Head to address any problems relating to their academic performance.

Students who are experiencing ongoing academic problems are requested to meet with their parents, the Academic Head and the relevant lecturer to discuss and resolve the areas that are affected.

All meetings and correspondence with 'at risk' students and their parents must be documented and stored in their student file.

5.6 STUDENTS WITH LEARNING CHALLENGES

Students with learning challenges are accommodated as far as possible, taking the current institutional resources into consideration. The Academic Board is responsible for approving any recommendations made by the Quality Assurance Committee to accommodate a student with any of the following learning challenges:

- A cognitive disadvantage which affects their ability to learn at the same rate as their peers.

- A specific learning difficulty which may or may not be linked to a cognitive disability.

- A speech and language impairment affecting their ability to comprehend.

- A physical disability and/or sensory impairment.

- An emotional disability which can affect their ability to learn.

- An extended period of absence which could occur for a variety of reasons.

- A behavioural impairment affecting their ability to concentrate and therefore learn effectively.

- Students who speak a different language at home than the one they speak at The Institution.

5.7 ACADEMIC QUERIES

Accurate and timely information must be provided for any academic queries that students may have from time to time. Queries may relate to programme information, career pathway information or administrative information pertaining to academic matters. The Academic Head is responsible for handling such queries.

5.8 LEARNING SUPPORT MATERIALS

Learning support materials are made available to all students. Refer to The Institution's Learning Support Materials Policy for more details.

5.9 LEARNER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Information regarding all modules the student is currently enrolled in is made available to the student through the use of an electronic Learner Management System

(LMS). Students have access to their relevant module guides, assessment briefs and learning support materials and are able to electronically submit assessments when instructed by their lecturer.

6. STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

6.1 STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

The Institution promotes continuous feedback from students through informal discussions and an 'open door' policy where any student may approach any lecturer, Quality Assurance Manager, or the Academic Head to discuss personal and/or academic concerns.

6.2 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COMMITTEE

The Institution encourages communication between students and The Institution using the Student Representative Committee (SRC) as a vehicle to facilitate the process. The SRC meets on a quarterly basis to air comments and concerns, and receive feedback from the Quality Assurance Committee within 2 weeks of this meeting.

6.3 STUDENT SOCIAL EVENTS

Regular student and staff social events provide an opportunity to strengthen relations and take a break from the demands of the intensive curriculum.

7. STUDENT SUPPORT

7.1 OPEN DAY

The Institution holds bi-annual Open Days to encourage prospective students to visit and experience the 'body of work' created in each year of the programmes.

Prospective students are able to meet with the academic and support staff who are available to answer any queries relating to a career in fashion as well as the experience of studying at the Institution.

7.2 ENROLMENT SUPPORT

Administrative staff must ensure that they are helpful, clear and consultative in the way they relate to and make arrangements for students and that during the registration process they are clear about what resources and equipment The Institution provides as well as what the student will need to supply themselves.

7.3 STUDENT COUNSELLING

The Institution does not have the resources required to provide a counselling service to students but does provide information regarding possible service providers who

are able to cater for the specific type of support and/or counselling the student requires.

7.4 FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The Institution offers a small number of bursary opportunities, covering the academic fees only for that academic year, to students who are deemed to have been previously disadvantaged and/or having extreme financial difficulties and who have demonstrated they are deserving of the bursary opportunity. The Executive Committee is responsible for evaluating the bursary applications and for submitting its recommendations to the Academic Board for approval.

7.5 ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT SERVICES

Administrative staff are available to assist the students with queries relating to admissions, accounts, fees, facilities, accommodation and general queries that may arise.

Printing, copying, scanning, laminating and binding services are provided to all registered students at a competitive rate.

7.6 LIBRARY SUPPORT

Assigned bursary students are available to assist students in accessing and selecting appropriate library resources as required. Library resources are available to students on site.

7.7 IT SUPPORT

The lecturer/s responsible for delivering the Digital Fashion Application modules are available to assist students with most IT queries relating to navigating the Windows operating system, using the internet effectively, and the application of the various functions of the MS Office programmes, Corel Draw, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop and Adobe InDesign.

7.8 GRADUATE SUPPORT

Upon graduation, every effort is made to place students in suitable companies. Lecturers are available to answer any queries relating to contracts, fees, new job opportunities etc. Any job opportunities that The Institution is informed of are forwarded to graduates seeking employment.

Graduates are encouraged to contact The Institution on a regular basis so that The Institution can keep abreast of their performance in the industry. Graduate success stories are communicated to relevant stakeholders.

8. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Institution will ensure that academic and support staff have sufficient training in order to provide the required student support and development services of the programmes offered by The Institution.

Staff performance is monitored by the Quality Assurance Committee and recommendations for additional training and in-house workshops must be submitted to the Academic Board for approval.

9. REFERENCES

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