

STUDENT PASTORAL CARE POLICY

Te Kupenga is a leading provider of Catholic thought leadership, knowledge and faith formation in NZ and is the home of three national agencies: the Catholic Theological College, responsible for providing approved tertiary qualifications; the National Centre for Religious Studies, responsible for supporting Religious Education in Catholic schools; and the Nathaniel Centre for Bioethics, responsible for research and advocacy on bioethical issues. Te Kupenga acknowledges and supports the Church's commitment to tangata whenua and to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

University of Notre Dame Australia (UNDA) policies also apply. Where there is a conflict between this policy and the UNDA policies, the UNDA policies should be followed.

Purpose

To ensure all students at Te Kupenga – Catholic Theological College (CTC) can access the support they need to ensure their academic success and personal hauora (wellbeing), and that students at risk are identified and connected with support.

Principles

- Students receive clear assistance to achieve in their academic study and pathways.
- Students feel they are part of the CTC community, and that their hauora is valued.
- Students have accessible and non-intimidating channels for expressing concerns or grievances.
- CTC considers the safety of students, staff and the public in all procedures relating to the students' involvement in programmes.
- CTC ensures that all aspects of the Privacy Act and the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 are complied with in respect to student privacy and welfare.
- CTC adheres to the requirements of the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021.

Processes

This section outlines the processes in place to ensure student support at CTC.

Student orientation

All new students are offered an orientation, whether they are classroom based or learning by distance. On acceptance to CTC, students receive information which lays out guidance and support systems available to students. They are given access to the CTC online learning system, which has orientation information. Students are also directed to the CTC website, which holds information about student pastoral care. At the Auckland campus, before the first week of a semester, the College provides an in-person orientation for all new students enrolled in the Bachelor or Graduate Diploma programmes. During the orientation, aspects of the Student Handbook relating to guidance and support systems are discussed with students. Distance students can take part in the orientation programme by Zoom. Sessions are also recorded for later reference.

Pastoral Care Team (PCT)

CTC recognises that student hauora is important for all students. Designated staff members in the PCT can advise students on support available and link them with services in a knowledgeable and caring way. A member of the PCT will assist students experiencing difficulties to connect with a General Practitioner, a Catholic social service agency or counselling service, or other appropriate services according to their needs. The contact details for the PCT are given to students as part of their orientation.

Code of Practice

The purpose of the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 is to ensure, so far as practicable, that tertiary students can succeed academically in a safe, healthy and supportive learning environment. By way of fulfilling our responsibilities under the Code, included in the PCT is a designated staff member overseeing the pastoral care of international students and a staff member overseeing the pastoral care of domestic students.

Please refer to the latest version of the Code of Practice available on SharePoint or the Te Kupenga website for details.

Study support

Students are advised to seek support from their lecturer when they need assistance or are finding a particular paper or assignment challenging. This is included in the student information provided and reinforced by lecturers. Where further support for study is requested, the College will work with the student to provide support. This could include English as a second or other language (ESOL) support and disability-specific or culturally specific support.

Pathways Support

The CTC Director and Dean are available to advise students on paper choices, further study, or career options. Students will be advised of contact details as part of their orientation, and on the website.

Student Representatives

Student representatives serve on the Board of Studies, Library Committee, and the Academic Advisory Board. Terms of Reference for these committees are available, and minutes are kept of all meetings.

Safety

CTC meets its obligations under Health and Safety legislation and has policies to address these. Students are provided with relevant information as part of their orientation.

Care for each other

CTC staff are encouraged to act if they observe students causing people to be alarmed, upset or worried; interfering with or interrupting the education process of others; or leaving people in fear of their own safety or the safety of others. Staff should decide whether the situation is an emergency, or not. If a learner's safety is at risk, call 111. If it is not an emergency, contact the CTC Director or a member of the PCT. refer to appropriate support services. All Te Kupenga personnel and students are encouraged to support each other and seek help when needed. Where anyone in the Te Kupenga community has reason to believe that someone's life is at risk, this is a valid reason to breach confidentiality, and CTC expects the risk to be immediately raised and authorities alerted.

Complaints and Concerns

Where a student feels that there has been a breach of this policy, they should refer to the Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Policy. International students are also able to make use of the government's International Student Contract Dispute Resolution Scheme (DRS) by contacting NZQA.

Review and Approval

The Student Pastoral Care Policy is subject to the normal three-year review cycle. The Academic Advisory Board should be consulted as part of the review process before final approval by the Te Kupenga Governance Board.

Policy approved: 25th August 2023

Last review : 21st August 2026

Next review due: August 2029