



BITS COLLEGE

Student Support Guideline

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Abbreviations

AC	Academic Commission
CAC	College Academic Council
EM	Executive Management
QA	Quality Assurance
AVD	Academic Vice Dean
ADVD	Administrative Vice Dean

1. BITS College

1.1 Brief Introduction

BITS College is a private higher learning institution with a vision of promoting excellence in the production, growth and dissemination of advanced scientific knowledge through teaching and research. The College is conceived, established and run by caring and committed educators and innovators who seek to improve the quality of higher education in the country through the introduction of innovative and enlightened education programs that help students realize their potential. It aims at realizing this by engaging a management team experienced in education and business, a dedicated team of faculty and staff, well-designed academic programs, world class educational facilities and cutting-edge technologies.

The executive officer of the College is the Dean assisted by the Academic Vice Dean (AVD) and the Administrative Vice Dean (ADVD).

The highest decision-making body of the College is the Academic Commission (AC). However, most academic and administration activities are carried out by the Executive Management (EM). The College Academic Council (CAC) is a standing committee accountable to the EM. The CAC, working under the chairmanship of AVD, deliberates and decides on all academic matters of the College on behalf of the EM. At School level, the Head, program coordinators and staff members deliberate on the day-to-day academic matters in their respective academic committees.

Currently, the College has four academic programs, namely:

- Bachelor of Science Degree in Software Engineering
- Bachelor of Science Degree in Information Technology and Systems
- Master of Science Degree in Information Technology Management

This guideline has been produced for all new and existing students to support during their time at the College. The aim is to provide an overview of the range of academic and personal support that is available to students at the College.

1.2 Definitions

- **Guidance** may be defined as a range of experiences to help students make personal, social, educational and career choices.
- **Counselling** may be seen as the empowerment of students to make decisions, solve problems, develop coping strategies and resolve difficulties they may be experiencing.

2 General Guide

2.1 Student Support Office

The Office of Student Support located at the entrance of the College, is the first point of contact for all students and visitors for advice and guidance. The aim of the office is to respond to students' queries from start to finish resolving any issues presented in one area.

The college has experienced student service advisers who have a generic training and are therefore capable of giving students the required details. The personnel in charge will provide answers to all inquiries. They will also guide students through orientation of the College, answer queries and lead them to proper offices.

Students can come to the student service office to receive advice and guidance on all support areas including:

- Academic calendar and application
- Exam queries
- Tutoring service
- Advice and guidance
- Disabilities
- Counseling
- Extracurricular activities
- Community service
- Internships
- Research proposals
- Student financial aid and scholarships

- Support for IT registration and e-Learning
- Student records – including registration; enrolment, etc.
- ID Card access issues
- Replacement ID cards
- And many more inquiries

2.2 Office Opening times

The student support office is open per the following schedules:

Working days:	Monday to Friday 8.30am – 7:30 PM
Week ends:	Saturday and Sunday 10.30am – 3:00 PM
Official Holidays:	Closed
Semester Break:	Monday to Friday 10:30 PM – 4:00 PM

2.3 Responsibility

The Student Support Office is accountable to the Academic Vice Dean (AVD) and provides leadership for all operational matters relating to supporting students in all matters during their stay in the College. The office is also responsible for the full implementation of the activities outlined in this guideline.

The College ensures the quality of student counseling and career guidance by:

- employing properly trained counselors
- conducting a systematic evaluation of activities of the office
- make sure that all three modality of counseling namely; Remedial, Developmental and Preventive are provided
- maintaining the allocation of resources and subsequently evaluating whether the resources are spent in an accountable manner for the work involved
- putting in place a secure and confidential recording system for the student support office.

3. Academic Support

3.1 Teaching Assistants

BITS College employs student teaching assistants (TAs) who play a role in student support by providing academic assistance, facilitating small group discussions, and offering additional guidance outside of regular class hours. They serve as a bridge between students and faculty, helping to clarify concepts, reinforce learning, and address individual concerns. The TAs also contribute to creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment, ensuring that all students have the resources they need to succeed academically. The College believes that this kind of involvement enhances the overall educational experience, making learning more accessible and engaging for students.

3.2 Students on Academic Probation

Students with academic Probation have the right to consult the student support office. The Office works closely with academic advisors and organizes workshop every semester. The aim is to discuss collectively on the general matters related to academic activities. The Office also advises students on request on how to get tutoring if they are having trouble in the courses they failed and how to form proper study habits.

3.3 Library Services

The College library is open 7 days from 8:30 to 10:00 PM. While most of the materials are digital, students can also use the library to sit and read. There are also materials for students to borrow and return per the rules and regulation of the library.

3.4 IT Services

Students have full-fledged IT Services while at the College. The computer labs work 7 days from 8:30 to 10:00PM. Special arrangements have to be made if students want to spend the night working in the lab. As long as a student is registered, he/she can get service even out of office hours. IT services include access to:

- Computer lab
- Library database
- Student information system

- Internet
- Email
- Learning management system
- Electronic resources
- Online consultation

3.5 Help with Internship and community service Opportunities

The Student support office works closely with the Research and Outreach Programs Office of the College in order to help students secure internships in partial fulfillment for graduation. It also helps students to find out their interests in community service activities and advises on the kinds of service that are acceptable for fulfilling requirements for graduation.

4. Personal Support

4.1 Special need Support

The Student Support Office offers personalized support plans to ensure that all students with any kind of special need have equitable access to resources, infrastructures, and support services to foster an inclusive and empowering learning environment. It ensures infrastructures such as accessible classrooms, toilets, walkways, and elevators; resources such as accessible digital content, and multiple methods of content delivery in classrooms; support services such as note-taking assistance, academic advising, and peer mentoring programs to support students with their special needs.

4.2 Guidance and Counseling

Being young adults, students may face different challenges such as adjustment to new peer groups and academic atmosphere. The need for student orientation, guidance and counseling services is, therefore, crucial. The Student Support Office has, therefore, a guidance and counselling unit that specially addresses the needs of students on an individual basis. Students may make private appointments, may be referred by parents, academic advisors or instructors.

The College ensures that counselors are trained to at least Degree level and committed to maintaining their competence through continued professional development (CPD). The Guidance and Counseling unit has the following roles and responsibilities.

- Provision of general orientation to new students
- Organize workshops on academic, social, emotional and related issues
- Individual Counseling
- Develop peer counseling system / Group counseling
- Establish different recreational and entertainment services.
- Establish a system to provide online orientation, guidance and counseling services

4.3 Student Complaints

The student support office follows steps mentioned below in the guideline to provide a clear and fair process for students to express concerns, file complaints, and seek resolution for issues related to academic, administrative, or personal matters.

These guidelines apply to all students enrolled at College. This includes but is not limited to: Academic issues, Administrative issues, and Personal issues.

To resolve any of the mentioned issues the college through the Student Support Office follows the following complaint Procedures:

4.3.1 Informal Resolution

Students are encouraged to first attempt informal resolution of their issue directly with the relevant individual or department.

4.3.2 Formal Complaint

If the issue remains unresolved, students can file a formal complaint through the following steps:

Step 1: Complete a complaint form available from the Student Support Office. The complaint form is also available online

Step 2: Submit the completed complaint form to the Student Support Office along with any supporting documentation.

Step 3: The complaint will be reviewed by the designated office. The student will receive a written acknowledgment of their complaint within two days.

Step 4: An investigation will be conducted, which may involve interviews with the student, relevant parties, and witnesses.

Step 5: The student will be notified of the findings of the investigation and any proposed resolutions within the following ten days.

Step 6: The student has the right to appeal the findings of the investigation to the Student Support Office or Academic Vice Dean within five days.

The Student Council will assist in mediating conflicts between students or between students and the administration, working alongside the Student Support Office to find fair and constructive solutions.

All Complaints will be handled with confidentiality to the extent possible. However, the College may be required to disclose information to relevant parties as part of the investigation and resolution process.

The College along side with the Student Support Office will strive to resolve complaints in a timely manner. All stages of the complaint process will be completed within a week, unless extenuating circumstances require an extension.

The College prohibits retaliation against any student who files a complaint or participates in the investigation process.

Students can access additional resources and support related to filing complaints by contacting the Student Support Office within the Office hour mentioned in this guideline.

4.4 Career Development

The Student Support Office organizes different sessions for students at various levels of their studies. Some of these sessions are described below.

First Year:

- A program to assist students to settle into College. This is done through developing
 - responsibilities,
 - study skills,
 - subject diaries,
 - self enhancement and stress management,
 - tutorial sessions
- Individual appointments as necessary

- Parental workshops

Second Year:

- Individual appointments as necessary,
- Monthly public seminar on information on study techniques and career development opportunities.
- Yearly life skill seminars
- Time management training
- Research and Projects workshop done by senior students which is done yearly

Third Year:

- Individual appointments as necessary
- Guidance is provided to assist students in choice of elective courses
- Monthly public seminar on information on study techniques and career development opportunities
- Guidance is provided to assist students in choice of their internship for the next year

Fourth Year:

- One timetabled class period per week which includes:
 - Preparation for work experience,
 - Preparation of CV's,
 - Interview preparation,
 - Other work and training opportunities,

Fifth Year

- A program to assist students to settle into working environments. This is done through series of training on
 - Soft skills
 - Organizational culture
 - Experience sharing sessions
 - Life-Work Balance

4.5 Drop in Appointments

All students can also access the drop-in service that operates on specific days and time of the week. The Student Support Office will have the regular schedule of the drop-in services that will be changed every two months per the convenience of the counselor.

4.6 Confidentiality

The Student Support Office in general and the Guidance and Counseling unit in particular are required to keep information on students confidential. However, they may not always offer absolute confidentiality to their students.

In exceptional circumstances, a counsellor may take the decision to break confidentiality, with or without the student's consent. In this case his/her professional judgment will be used:

- if there is a risk of the student harming himself/herself or being harmed
- if there is risk of another person being harmed
- if there is risk of a serious crime being committed

In these cases, the counsellor will refer the student/concern to the Academic Vice Dean (AVD) for immediate follow up and appropriate action.

5. Student Government/Council

The Student Government/Council serves as the representative body for the student community, acting as a bridge between students and the administration to ensure that student voices are heard and considered in decision-making. The council plays a crucial role in advocating for student needs, organizing student-led initiatives, and fostering a supportive and inclusive campus environment.

The Student Council will work in close collaboration with the Student Support Office;

- To identify and address student concerns, enhance support services, and develop programs that promote student well-being

- To plan and execute events, workshops, and awareness campaigns that address key student issues, such as stress management, career development, and social integration
- In organizing student-led initiatives that complement the efforts of the Student Support Services, such as peer mentoring programs and community service projects
- To develop initiatives that promote equity, accessibility, and cultural awareness across the college

5.1 Structure and Composition

The student government/council must have the Council President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer as the main committee heads. Their specific duties and responsibilities associated with each role is determined by the student body.

5.2 Election Process and Operation

Students with good academic standing, and prior involvement other extracurricular activities are the main requirements for students to run for council positions. By conducting elections, eligible students will be chosen for the defined roles of the Student council. The election is done yearly to give chance to other eligible students to be part of their student government.

The student council will have a regular bi-weekly meetings to discuss matters concerning the student body as well as events. It must keep meeting minutes to disseminate information to the student body, Student Support Office and administration.

The Student Council will establish clear communication channels to keep the student body informed about important developments, upcoming events, and available support services. Feedback mechanisms will be put in place to allow students to easily share their concerns, suggestions, and experiences with both the Student Council and Student Support Office.

The Student Support Office will provide training and development opportunities for Student Council members to enhance their leadership skills, understanding of student needs, and ability to effectively advocate for their peers. Ongoing support and mentorship from the Student Support Services will be available to help council members fulfill their roles effectively.

5.3 Transparency and Accountability

Regular meetings between the Student Council and Student Support Office will be held to discuss ongoing issues, share feedback, and develop joint initiatives aimed at improving student life on campus. The student council will operate with transparency and accountability, regularly reporting its activities, decisions, and use of resources to the student body and the Student Support Office. The council will be responsible for upholding the values and policies of the college, ensuring that all actions and initiatives are in the best interest of the student community.

6. Other College Support

6.1 Withdrawal

Students can go to the student support office to get advice on how to complete the withdrawal process in cases of academic dismissal or withdrawal for personal reasons. If a student is not sure about his/her future or on how to continue his/her studies, the information point personnel can also arrange for support and counseling.

6.2 Essential service areas

To enhance student life and ensure their well-being, the college provides several essential services conveniently located across the campus.

6.2.1 Entertainment Zone

For recreational needs, the **game zone** is located on the ground floor of the building, featuring a range of games and activities designed to provide a fun and engaging environment for students to unwind. The layout of the area ensures that students with special needs can enjoy the facilities comfortably.

6.2.2 Sport Area

The sport area on our college is enhanced by a special agreement with Yeka Park, offering students additional recreational facilities beyond the campus compound. The on-campus sports complex is located in front of the college building and Yeka Park is just a short walk from the campus. The park provides expansive outdoor spaces for activities such as jogging and football

and is equipped with accessible paths and rest areas ensuring that all students regardless of physical ability, can fully enjoy the facilities.

Additionally, students have the right to enjoy the outdoor sport facilities in the premises of the College. These include Table Tennis, Basketball and strength exercises.

6.2.3 Cafeteria

The cafeteria, in the premises of the College, offers a variety of fast food. It is equipped with accessible seating arrangements, making it an ideal spot for students to relax and socialize between classes.

6.2.4 Finance Service

The **cashier's office**, where students can manage financial transactions and address any billing concerns, is located on the ground floor of the building next to the student support office, easily accessible and centrally placed for convenience. Signage and support staff are available to assist all students in navigating and utilizing campus services effectively, contributing to a supportive and enriching environment that helps students thrive academically and socially.

6.3 Safety and Security

6.3.1 Emergency Services

In case of emergency, please contact the Campus safety and security office located in the ground floor of the College building

6.3.2 Building Safety

Students of the College are expected to coordinate with Campus safety personnel for safety procedures in the building. Only those with training in the use of fire extinguishers are permitted to actually fight a fire.

6.3.3 First Aid

The College has first aid arrangements in place on the ground floor of the College, including first aid kits and first aid facilities, to assist students and staff who are injured or become ill.

7. Self-Assessment & Improvement Guidelines

The Student support office conducts regular self-assessments, evaluate its effectiveness, and implement strategies for continuous improvement. The main purpose of this is:

- ◆ To ensure the office consistently meets the evolving needs of students;
- ◆ To identify areas of strength and weakness;
- ◆ To foster a culture of continuous improvement;
- ◆ To provide a framework for accountability and transparency.

These guidelines apply to all aspects of the Student support office operations, including: Services offered, processes, Staff, and Resources.

7.1 Self-Assessment Process

Conducting a self-assessment of student support services in a college is a vital process that ensures these services effectively meet the diverse needs of students. This assessment involves several key steps in our college starting from gathering feedback from students, staff, and faculty through surveys, focus groups, and interviews to understand their experiences and perceptions. Then analyze the data on service usage, student outcomes, and satisfaction rates to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Following this, the office benchmark against best practices and standards in the field provides a comparative perspective before using the findings to develop actionable recommendations and strategies for enhancing the quality and accessibility of support services.

By taking these steps, the college ensures that its student support services contribute meaningful student success and well-being, driving continuous improvement and fostering a supportive educational environment.

7.2 Evaluation & Monitoring

Evaluation and monitoring are critical components of any student support guideline, ensuring that services are effectively meeting the needs of students and contributing to their academic and personal success. This takes the following steps:

Step 1- Regular reviews: Conducting periodic reviews of the office's performance based on the collected data and analysis in the self assessment process.

Step 2 - Feedback mechanisms: Establishing mechanisms for ongoing feedback from students, staff, and stakeholders.

Step 3 - Performance tracking: Regularly tracking key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor progress toward improvement goals.

Step 4 - Reporting: Generate reports summarizing the findings of self-assessments and progress made towards improvement goals and share it with students and faculty to be transparent about the Student Support Office's performance and efforts to improve services.

8. Contact

All inquiries should be addressed to:

BITS College
P.O. Box 33220
Addis Ababa
Ethiopia
Tel.: +251 982 363636
Email: sp@bitscollege.edu.et

9. References

1. Legislation of BITS College
2. Undergraduate Program Student Handbook