

## STUDENT PROGRESS POLICY

Current version in effect from: 1 Jan 2020  
Approved by Academic Board: 29 May 2015  
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### Related Documents

*Regulation 2: Academic Board*

*Appeals Policy*

Standard 8 'Overseas student visa requirements' of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018

*Enrolment Policy*

*Fees Policy*

### 1. Rationale and Objectives

- 1.1 The University is responsible for monitoring the progress of enrolled students through their course, and for implementing appropriate intervention strategies for students at risk of unsatisfactory progress. The University recognises that students may be susceptible to various difficulties during enrolment, including but not limited to illness, financial stress, and insufficient language or study skills. Continuous monitoring and feedback is vital to ensure that students are provided with structured support, and to identify problems before they become insurmountable.
- 1.2 The Regulations provide that Academic Board may discontinue the enrolment of a student whose progress has been unsatisfactory. This policy establishes how these responsibilities are exercised by establishing the criteria for satisfactory progress, the course of action to be taken to support a student who may be at risk of unsatisfactory progress, and the circumstances in which the Academic Board may discontinue enrolment on the basis of unsatisfactory progress.
- 1.3 Each College is responsible for monitoring the academic progress of all students enrolled through that College, and must evaluate the course progress of each student at least once per year. This responsibility is exercised by the Academic Dean in the case of students in coursework awards, and by the Research Coordinator in the case of students in higher degrees by research.
- 1.4 The University has a particular responsibility to monitor the course progress of overseas students studying in Australia and to ensure their timely completion.

### 2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all students enrolled in a course of study towards an award at the University of Divinity. This policy does not apply to students undertaking a single unit of study or to persons auditing a unit of study.

### 3. Definitions

- 3.1 **Satisfactory progress (coursework students):** For students enrolled in a coursework award ('coursework students'), satisfactory progress means:
- a) Successful completion of at least 50% of units attempted in a calendar year; and
  - b) Successful completion of each unit on the first or second attempt (that is, no unit is failed more than once), not including units from which a student withdraws.
- 3.2 **Satisfactory progress (research students students):** For students enrolled in a higher degree by research ('research students'), satisfactory progress means:
- a) Successful completion of confirmation of candidature within the prescribed time limit; and
  - b) Submission of a satisfactory annual report during each year of candidature; and
  - c) Completion of prescribed attendance at research seminars and conferences during each year of candidature.
- 3.3 **Student Progress Panel:** A panel of three persons appointed by the Chair of the Academic Board, and is comprised of:
- a) One academic staff member of the University who is not a member of the student's home College; and
  - b) the Academic Dean (in the case of coursework students) or the Research Coordinator (in the case of research students) with responsibility for the student; and
  - c) the Dean of Academic Programs (in the case of coursework students) or the Dean of the School of Graduate Research (in the case of research students).
- 4. Monitoring course progress: coursework students**
- 4.1 The Academic Dean has primary responsibility for monitoring the course progress of coursework students.
- 4.2 Lecturers of units in which a coursework student is enrolled must notify the student's Academic Dean immediately if they believe the student may be at risk of unsatisfactory progress through their course of study.
- 4.3 At the end of each calendar year the Dean of Academic Programs provides a report to the Academic Dean of each College on any students in that College who appear not to have made satisfactory progress in that calendar year.
- 4.4 The Academic Dean examines the report, determines whether or not a student is at risk of making unsatisfactory progress, and informs the Dean of Academic Programs of the action taken in relation to each student on the report.
- 4.5 If the Academic Dean or the Dean of Academic Programs determines at any time that a student is at risk of unsatisfactory progress, then an intervention strategy must be implemented immediately in accordance with section 6 of this Policy.
- 5. Monitoring course progress: research students**

- 5.1 The Research Coordinator has primary responsibility for monitoring the course progress of research students.
- 5.2 Supervisors of research students must notify the student's Research Coordinator immediately if they believe the student may be at risk of unsatisfactory progress.
- 5.3 At the end of each calendar year the Dean of the School of Graduate Research reviews the annual reports submitted by research students, and provides a report to the Research Coordinator of each College on any students in that College who appear not to have made satisfactory progress in that calendar year.
- 5.4 The Research Coordinator examines the report, determines whether or not a student is at risk of making unsatisfactory progress, and informs the Dean of the School of Graduate Research of the action taken in relation to each student on the report.
- 5.5 If the Research Coordinator or Dean of the School of Graduate Research or the supervisor of a research student determines at any time that a student is at risk of unsatisfactory progress, then an intervention strategy must be implemented immediately in accordance with section 6 of this Policy.

## **6. Intervention**

- 6.1 If a student is identified as being at risk of making unsatisfactory progress, then the student's College must notify the Dean of Academic Programs (coursework students) or the Dean of the School of Graduate Research (research students) immediately via written communication. This communication should also include a proposed intervention strategy outlining clearly the steps to be taken as part of the intervention strategy and the time period from implementation until completion and final review date.
- 6.2 The Dean of Academic Programs or the Dean of the School of Graduate Research must place an 'At Risk' flag on the student's enrolment record until the risk is resolved.
- 6.3 The College and the Dean of Academic Programs or the Dean of the School of Graduate Research must agree on an intervention strategy. The intervention strategy may include a determination that the student's continued enrolment be conditional upon adherence to the intervention strategy.
- 6.4 An intervention strategy may include one or more of the following, noting that some options may not be available for an overseas student depending on the visa type they hold. The College should seek advisement from the Dean of Academic Programs:
  - a) A schedule of additional meetings with the Academic Dean or Research Coordinator or other academic staff
  - b) Preparation of an agreed completion plan showing the expected completion date for the course and how the student is to achieve completion by the expected completion date
  - c) Limitation of enrolment to part-time study or to a single unit of study and adjustment of the completion date

- d) A listing of measures to be taken to improve outcomes, such as allocating more time to study, improving study efficiency, seeking assistance from academic staff
- e) In the case of insufficient English language proficiency, enrolment in a language course, the successful completion of which is essential for continuing enrolment
- f) Referral to an academic skills program or other relevant counselling or learning and language support services
- g) Applying for Leave of Absence
- h) Establishing a mechanism to monitor closely the continued progress of the student.

6.5 If the intervention strategy recommends that the student be asked to meet academic requirements beyond those in the Regulation and Determination for the applicable course of study, then application must be made directly to the Academic Board. The application must specify the proposed academic requirements, why they are proposed, how they are to be applied, and how the student may demonstrate successful completion of them.

6.6 In the case of an overseas student on an overseas student visa, if the intervention strategy recommends a delayed completion date, the Office of the Vice-Chancellor must report the implementation of the intervention strategy to the relevant government department, and, if required, issue a new or revised Confirmation of Enrolment with the revised completion date.

6.7 The College is responsible for ensuring that a student is notified in writing of all measures to be implemented. In the case of an overseas student on an overseas student visa, such notification must record the University's intention to report the student to the relevant government Department. Such letters constitute an early warning notice and may subsequently be used to constitute evidence of unsatisfactory progress.

6.8 The College is responsible for monitoring the student's adherence to the intervention strategy until the risk of unsatisfactory progress is resolved. After this has been confirmed, the College must request the Dean of Academic Programs or the Dean of the School of Graduate Research to remove the 'at risk' flag from the student's enrolment record.

## **7. Student Progress Panel**

7.1 If after preparation of an intervention strategy the College or the Dean of Academic Programs or the Dean of the School of Graduate Research determines

- a) that the intervention strategy is not being implemented satisfactorily; or
- b) that the student is refusing to comply with the intervention strategy; or
- c) that on completion of the intervention strategy the student is still at risk of unsatisfactory progress; or
- d) that the student has made unsatisfactory progress;

then the student must be referred to a Student Progress Panel via written notification by the relevant Dean to the Chair of the Academic Board.

- 7.2 The Student Progress Panel must meet within thirty days of a referral being made.
- 7.3 The relevant Dean must provide the Student Progress Panel with a copy of the student's enrolment record, and any evidence relating to the student's course progress and the intervention strategy.
- 7.4 The student must be given reasonable opportunity to provide a written statement to the Student Progress Panel and submit this written statement to the relevant Dean.
- 7.5 The student must attend a meeting of the Student Progress Panel to discuss the student's course progress. Failure of a student to meet with the Student Progress Panel may constitute evidence of unsatisfactory progress.
- 7.6 The student may be accompanied at the meeting of the Student Progress Panel by one support person chosen by the student. The support person is not an advocate for the student and may not speak on behalf of the student, but may provide advice and support to the student and may take notes.
- 7.7 After completion of these requirements, the Student Progress Panel must agree upon a written report and provide it within five days of the meeting to the Chair of the Academic Board. The report may include recommendations at the discretion of the Student Progress Panel, and must include one of the following recommendations:
- a) that the student has made satisfactory progress and no further action is required
  - b) that the student has made satisfactory progress but remains at risk of unsatisfactory progress and further intervention or support is required, the recommendation to specify the nature and time limits of such intervention or support
  - c) that the student has made unsatisfactory progress and enrolment should be discontinued.
- 7.8 The Chair of the Academic Board must inform the student via written communication of the outcome of the Student Progress Panel within seven days of its meeting.
- 7.9 The Chair of the Academic Board is responsible for ensuring that recommendations of the Student Progress Panel are implemented in accordance with this policy.

## **8. Discontinuation of enrolment**

- 8.1 If the Student Progress Panel recommends that the student's enrolment be discontinued on the grounds of unsatisfactory progress, its report and recommendations must be forwarded to the next meeting of the Academic Board for consideration.
- 8.2 The student must be notified in writing by the Dean of Academic Programs (in the case of coursework students) or the Dean of the School of Graduate Research (in the case of research students) of a recommendation of the Student Progress Panel to discontinue the student's enrolment. The student is entitled to provide a written comment of up to 1,000 words in length within seven days of the date of notification, such comment is to be appended to the report of the Student Progress Panel to the Academic Board.

- 8.3 The Academic Board may discontinue a student's enrolment if it determines that a student has made unsatisfactory progress.
- 8.4 If the Academic Board discontinues a student's enrolment on the grounds of unsatisfactory progress, the decision must be notified in writing to the student by the Dean of Academic Programs (in the case of coursework students) or the Dean of the School of Graduate Research (in the case of research students) within seven days of the date on which the decision was made.
- 8.5 If the enrolment of an overseas student on an overseas student visa is discontinued on the grounds of unsatisfactory progress, the decision must be reported to the relevant government Department no later than twenty business days after the date of the decision if no appeal is initiated, or at the conclusion of an unsuccessful appeal.
- 8.6 A student whose candidature has been discontinued on the grounds of unsatisfactory progress may appeal that decision in accordance with the University's Appeals Policy.
- 9. Date of Next Review**
- 9.1 This policy is to be reviewed no later than 31 December 2023.