

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS POLICY



Current version in effect from: 1 Mar 2024
Approved by Academic Board: 16 Feb 2024
Revised by Academic Board: None
Policy Steward: Dean of Academic Programs

1. Purpose and Context

- 1.1 The University of Divinity is committed to ensuring its students are provided with the support and resources required to assist them to be successful in their studies.
- 1.2 This Policy outlines how the University identifies students who are at risk of not successfully completing their units of study and the support available to students to assist them with successfully completing their units of study, including the University's processes for ensuring that students are aware of these support options.
- 1.3 This Policy is published in accordance with the University's obligations under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (Cth).
- 1.4 This Policy should be read in conjunction with related Policies of the University, available online at <https://divinity.edu.au/about/governance/policies-and-procedures/>. These include:

Academic Integrity Policy

Appeals Policy

Assessment Policy

Bursary Policy

Complaints Policy

Conduct and Misconduct Policy

Critical Incidents Policy and the Emergency Procedures Guide

Enrolment Policy

Higher Degrees by Research Policy

Languages Other Than English Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy

Student Support Plan (Schedule 1 to this Policy)

Transfer Between Registered Providers Policy

Whistleblower Policy

- 1.5 Students may also consult forms provided by the University to support procedures within these Policies available online at <https://divinity.edu.au/forms>

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Student support services: Services that offer academic or extra-curricular support to assist students to realise their academic potential and maximise the benefits of a course of study.
- 2.2 Reasonable adjustment: Student support services (including adjustments to assessment or classroom practices) provided to a student or group of students that:
 - a) are necessary to ensure every student has the opportunity to engage in their studies to achieve their academic potential
 - b) are proportionate to need without placing an undue burden on the provider of the services.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 The University ensures that support is available to students to assist them with successfully completing their units and that students are made aware of these support services throughout their study.
- 3.2 The University undertakes:
 - a) to identify students who are at risk of not successfully completing their units of study; and
 - b) to communicate with students identified at risk to ensure they are aware of support services available to assist them in successfully completing their units of study;as detailed in the Student Progress section of this Policy.
- 3.3 The University offers numerous support options for students to assist in successful completion of their units of study as detailed in the Student Support Services section of this Policy. This includes making reasonable adjustments necessary to remove barriers to student participation in the University, in accordance with the University's mission and commitments.
- 3.4 The University publishes this Policy as well as more information regarding support for students on its website and through its Learning Management System and is committed to ensuring that information is accurate, comprehensive and up to date.

4. Student Support Services

- 4.1 The Office of the Vice-Chancellor is responsible for:
 - a) Ensuring that academic and operational processes are in place to monitor, measure, report, and respond to students at risk of not successfully completing their units of study.
 - b) Ensuring that academic and operational processes are in place to monitor, measure, report, and respond to students' diversity, inclusion, and wellbeing needs.
 - c) Ensuring that information on the University's website, Learning Management System and other online resources are accessible and support an inclusive and diverse student body aligned to the University's mission and commitments.

- d) Maintaining the Student Support Plan template as Schedule 1 to this Policy
- e) Administering and analysing an Annual Student Survey to all currently enrolled students to understand student motivations, needs and desired outcomes, to inform support for students, and to identify areas of excellence or improvement in the student experience.

4.2 Colleges and Schools are responsible for:

- a) Ensuring every new student attends an orientation program that provides information on:
 - i) the University's Code of Conduct
 - ii) student support services
 - iii) how to access the Learning Management System
 - iv) how to access library resources.
- b) Ensuring students can easily access information on student support services and relevant staff contacts, including how to access legal aid, counselling and medical support, and collaborating with other Colleges and Schools to coordinate provision of these services to provide an integrated and fruitful student experience
- c) Proactively identifying and removing barriers to student participation in units and courses, including making reasonable adjustments for students with particular needs as per the Student Support Plan (Schedule 1) and the Assessment Policy
- d) Proactively monitoring the progress of students to ensure they are provided with timely support where they experience difficulties in transitioning into and progressing through their studies.
- e) Identifying students who are at risk of not successfully completing their units of study and providing these students with appropriate support services.
- f) Promoting a safe environment and advising students on appropriate actions to ensure they are safe and secure in both onsite and online environments.
- g) Proactively preventing or responding to misconduct, and providing support for students who experience bullying, sexual harassment or assault and predatory behaviours in the course of their studies.

4.3 The School of Indigenous Studies is responsible for:

- a) Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and students from world Indigenous cultures
- b) Ensuring all parts of the University attend to providing a culturally safe environment for Indigenous students.

4.4 Students are responsible for:

- a) Abiding by the University's Code of Conduct.

- b) Participating in orientation events.
- c) Ensuring their College or School is aware of their needs.
- d) Availing themselves of student support services recommended by their College or School.
- e) Responding in a timely manner to communications.
- f) Adhering to intervention strategies agreed with their College or School in response to concerns about their academic progress.

5. Student Progress: Identification of At Risk Students

- 5.1 The Academic Dean of a College or School has primary responsibility for monitoring the student progress.
- 5.2 Lecturers of units in which a student is enrolled must notify the student's Academic Dean immediately if they believe the student may be at risk of not successfully completing their units of study. The Academic Dean is responsible for approving an intervention strategy.
- 5.3 At the end of each semester the Office of the Vice-Chancellor provides a report to the Academic Dean of each College and School on any students who, based on their results, are at risk of not successfully completing their course. "At risk" means:
 - a) Failing 50% or more of units attempted every semester; or
 - b) Failing the same unit of study more than once (not including units from which a student withdraws).
- 5.4 The Academic Dean must inform the Dean of Academic Programs of actions taken in relation to each student in the report.

6. Student Progress: Intervention

- 6.1 If the Academic Dean or the Dean of Academic Programs decides at any time that a student is at risk, then an intervention strategy must be implemented immediately.
- 6.2 The Academic Dean and Dean of Academic Programs (or the Dean of the School of Graduate Research in the case of research students) must agree on an intervention strategy and advise this in writing to the student.
- 6.3 An intervention strategy may include but is not limited to:
 - a) A schedule of additional meetings with the Academic Dean or other member of 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, with its successful completion being a requirement 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) Any other mechanism to monitor closely the student's progress.

6.4 The intervention strategy may include a requirement that the student's continued enrolment is conditional upon adherence to the intervention strategy.

6.5 If the intervention strategy recommends that the student be required to meet academic requirements beyond those in the Course Record for the applicable course of study, then application must be made to the Chair of the Academic Board to approve the intervention strategy, specifying:

- a) the proposed academic requirements
- b) why they are proposed and how they are to be applied
- c) how the student may demonstrate successful completion of them.

The Chair of the Academic Board has discretion to refer the matter to the Academic Board.

7. Student Progress: 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.

7.2 A Student Progress Panel is appointed by the Chair of the Academic Board and must include:

- a) One academic staff member of the University
- b) the Academic Dean or Research Coordinator with responsibility for the student
- 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).

Student Progress Panel: Procedural Requirements		
<i>Stage</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Required time frame</i>
Panel appointed	Chair of Academic Board	
Student has opportunity to provide written statement	Panel	
Panel meets with student	Panel	Up to 30 days after appointment
Panel reports to Chair of Academic Board	Panel	Up to 7 days after meeting
Panel report communicated to student	Chair of Academic Board	Up to 7 days after receiving report
Student may appeal	Student	Up to 14 days after receiving report

7.3 The Academic 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 and relevant evidence to the Student Progress Panel.

7.5 The student must attend a meeting of the Student Progress Panel to discuss the student's progress. Failure of a student to communicate with or meet with the Student Progress Panel may be regarded as 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 The Student Progress Panel must report in writing to the Chair of the Academic Board with one of the following recommendations:

- a) the student has made satisfactory progress and no further action is required
- b) the student has made satisfactory progress but remains at risk and further intervention is required, the recommendation to specify the nature and time limits of such intervention
- c) the student has made unsatisfactory progress and enrolment is discontinued.

7.8 The Chair of the Academic Board is responsible for ensuring that the recommendations of the Student Progress Panel are implemented.

8. Student Progress: Discontinuation of enrolment

8.1 When a Student Progress Panel recommends that student's enrolment be discontinued on the grounds of unsatisfactory progress:

- a) The student must be notified in writing of this decision

- b) The Chair of Academic Board has authority to discontinue the student's enrolment fourteen days after the date of notification to the student
- c) The Chair of Academic Board must report this action to the next meeting of the Academic Board.

8.2 The student whose enrolment has been discontinued may appeal that decision in accordance with the University's Appeals Policy. If the student lodges an appeal within fourteen days of the date of notification of discontinuation of enrolment, the student's enrolment is maintained until the appeals process is concluded.

9. Student Progress: International Students

9.1 The University has specific obligations to international students holding a student visa in accordance with the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018* and the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000*. These obligations are in addition to the provisions of this Policy, and College or School Academic Deans must consult with the Office of the Vice-Chancellor prior to initiating any action to ensure compliance with the University's obligations and the requirements of the student's visa.

9.2 For international students holding a student visa identified as potentially at risk, an Early Warning Notice must be issued.

9.3 If the intervention strategy recommends a delayed completion date or an approved deferral or suspension of enrolment, 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.

9.4 If the enrolment of an international student holding a student visa is discontinued on the grounds of unsatisfactory progress, the decision must be reported to the relevant Commonwealth Department

- a) within twenty working days of the date of notification of the decision (if no appeal is initiated), or
- b) at the conclusion of an appeal (if the decision to discontinue is upheld).

9.5 If an international student holding a student visa has exhausted internal and external avenues of appeals and the discontinuation of the student's enrolment is upheld, the University must cancel the student's enrolment and record the change to the overseas student's enrolment in PRISMS within fourteen days.

10. Date of next review

10.1 This Policy must be reviewed no later than 31 December 2028.

SCHEDULE A: STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN

Approved by Dean of Academic Programs: 16 Feb 2024



Procedure

1. Student completes Part A: Student Application for Support.
2. Student attaches supporting documentation.
3. Student submits Part A: to their Academic Dean.
4. Academic Dean completes Part B: Approved Plan, after consultation (if required) with appropriate disability or inclusion consultant
5. Academic Dean provides Part C: Notification of Recommended Student Support to the lecturer of each unit in which the student is enrolled, including units undertaken at Colleges or Schools other than the student's home College or School.
6. Academic Dean informs student of recommended adjustments.

Part A: Student Application for Support <i>To be completed by the student</i>		
Student Id:		
Family Name:		Given Names:
Phone:	Email:	
College / School:	Course:	Year:
Unit Codes:	Unit Titles:	
Lecturers (if known):		
Details of Application <i>Student to describe the issue which impacts ability to study. Documentary evidence must be provided.</i>		
Student Signature:		Date: / /

Part B: Approved Plan	
<i>Academic Dean to complete, after consultation (if required) with appropriate disability or inclusion consultant.</i>	
Support to be provided	
List adjustments, if any, to be made for the student, such as recordings of lectures, extra time for examinations or assignments, modifications to assignment requirements, etc.	
Academic Dean Signature:	Date: / /
Lecturers Advised:	
Review Date: / /	

Part C: Notification of Recommended Student Support	
<i>Academic Dean to complete and supply to the lecturer of each unit in which the student is enrolled.</i>	
Student Id:	
Family Name:	Given Names:
This student has supplied evidence of conditions that may have the following consequences on his or her learning:	
The University is committed to making reasonable adjustments to usual policy or practice to meet the needs of a student with a disability, without compromising the academic standards of a unit or course or the learning and participation of other students. The following adjustments are recommended:	
Academic Dean Signature:	Date: / /