

## Academic Progress and Students At Risk Policy and Procedures

### 1. Purpose

This policy sets out a framework for the identification and provision of support for students who are considered to be *at risk* of not making satisfactory progress in their course.

The following procedure outlines the mechanisms in place for:

- early identification of progress difficulties;
- strategies for intervention, including the implementation of study plans and Academic Monitoring Plans;
- subsequent steps towards show cause and exclusion for unsatisfactory progress where appropriate;
- extension of maximum candidature where required.

This policy complies with the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015* (HESF) in the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011*, *Education Services for Overseas Student Act 2000* and the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018*.

### 2. Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all students and administrative staff who are responsible for providing student services and to academic staff who identify students at- risk and/or demonstrate unsatisfactory academic progress.

### 3. Responsibilities

The Academic Director is responsible for the implementation of this procedure and for ensuring that staff and students are aware of its application and implement its requirements.

#### 3.1 Reporting

A report will be provided each term to the Academic Board by the Academic Director detailing the implementation and outcome of the Academic Progress Monitoring program of the preceding term.

#### 3.2 Records management

Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy and procedure in the Student Management System – RTO Manager. All written correspondence sent or received under this policy and procedure must be kept on the student's file the Student Management System.

### 4. Definitions

**CRICOS Code:** The Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) code represents a unique identification of all registered providers, which offer courses to overseas students studying in Australia.

**Defer:** to delay commencement or continuation of a course of study with approval by EIA.

**Interruption of Studies:** An authorised delay of study by a student who is enrolled in a course.

**Intervention strategy:** A study strategy and management plan aiming to meet minimum academic standards that is devised by a student in consultation with a designated staff.

**Maximum candidature:**

- i. the maximum candidature for a domestic student to complete a course is calculated by doubling the years required to complete the course on a normal full-time basis and adding one year;
- ii. maximum candidature for international students on an Australian student visa is the duration specified on their Confirmation of Enrolment and is the normal registered course duration (three years for a bachelor's degree) in full-time mode

**National Code 2018:** The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students.

**PRISMS:** Provider Registration and International Student Management System.

**Progress stages:** Students are classified into the following stages of academic progress:

**At risk:** an 'at risk' student is one who is deemed to be in danger of unsatisfactory progress. A student is deemed as "at risk" if they satisfy any of the following conditions:

- Fail the formative assessment in a unit.
- Fail any assessment in a unit with a mark below 40%.
- Fail two or more assessments in a unit.
- Attendance falls below 80% in a unit.

**Unsatisfactory progress.** A student is deemed to have made unsatisfactory progress if they satisfy any of the following conditions:

- failing fifty percent or more of their enrolled subjects in any term; and/or
- failing the same subject more than once; and/or
- failing to make sufficient academic progress to complete the course within the maximum candidature.

## 5. Requirements

- 5.1 EIA will provide advice about the course and study requirements to students in the Student Handbook and unit outlines and during the orientation. Any variations to these requirements will be advised to students in writing before commencement of the course or unit (as applicable).
- 5.2 The academic progress of all students must be monitored. The Academic Director is responsible for monitoring the academic progress of all students and academic staff are responsible for monitoring the students in their unit of study.
- 5.3 In particular data relating to the retention, progression and completion rates of student cohorts through units will be used to inform reviews and improvement of admission policies and teaching and learning strategies.
- 5.4 Students must meet and maintain minimum academic standards in order to complete within specified time limits and maintain satisfactory course progress. This is to ensure the currency of knowledge and skills is maintained in the qualification awarded.
- 5.5 Students who are deemed to be in need of support or at risk of unsatisfactory progress will be identified and provided with advice and assistance to support successful course completion.
- 5.6 The specified time limits or the number of years allowed to complete the requirements of a Bachelor Degree course is seven years from the first enrolment by a student in a unit of the course. The normal period for completion is three years. For international students, please see specific conditions in the Period of Candidature section below.

5.7 Students who fail to meet satisfactory progress by falling below the minimum academic standards and/or are unable to complete the course within the specified time limits despite support and intervention may be excluded from the course, their enrolment may be terminated, and they may be unable to reapply for admission for at least one semester.

## 6 Procedure

### Student Monitoring During Semester

6.1 Students must meet the minimum academic standards for each unit in order to progress through their course.

6.2 Units must be designed in a way to allow lecturers to use a combination of different relevant and appropriate assessment types to examine and monitor student progress in a unit of study including:

- Early formative assessments to monitor students' progress with learning relevant information, and understanding instructions and feedback, and to gauge the effectiveness and suitability of the learning activities should be undertaken in every unit within the first three weeks of semester;
- Summative assessments with clearly defined assessment criteria or assessment rubrics to examine the outcomes of a learning process against specific learning objectives.

6.3 Lecturers will review student progress after each assignment.

### At risk students

6.4 Students will be deemed at risk when they meet any of the criteria for at risk students outlined in the definition section of this policy.

6.5 Lecturers will report students identified as being at risk of poor academic performance to the Course Coordinator during the semester.

6.6 Students are notified in writing if they have been identified as being at risk. All written correspondence sent and received under this Policy must be recorded in the Student Management System.

### At risk student intervention procedure

6.7 The Course Coordinator and/or Lecturer will arrange an academic counselling session for any students who are deemed to be *at risk*. Assistance from the Academic Learning Support Officer and Welfare Support Officer will also be arranged for academic and non-academic matters respectively.

### Post-semester monitoring – Identification of students demonstrating unsatisfactory academic progress

6.8 Within ten (10) working days after the Release of Grade date of each semester as published in EIA's Academic Calendar, the Course Coordinator generates reports which identify the academic progress status for each APM stage of all students.

6.9 Students who have made unsatisfactory progress for the first time according to the criteria set out in the definition section of this Policy will be enrolled in Stage 1 of the Academic Progress Monitoring Program (APM). The progress of students already enrolled in a stage of the APM will also be reviewed and adjusted as necessary as outlined below.

### Overview of the staged APM program

6.10 APM Stage 1: A student who is identified as demonstrating unsatisfactory academic progress is placed at APM Stage 1.

Students who have achieved satisfactory academic progress for two consecutive terms after they have been placed at APM Stage 1 are removed from the APM program.

6.11 APM Stage 2: A student is identified at APM Stage 2 if:

- that student has been previously identified at APM Stage 1;
- that student does not achieve two consecutive terms of satisfactory academic progress after they have been placed at APM Stage 1.

Students who have achieved satisfactory academic progress for two consecutive terms after they have been placed at APM Stage 2 are removed from the APM program.

Students who are identified as demonstrating unsatisfactory academic progress again after they have been removed from the APM program will be placed at APM Stage 1.

6.12 APM Stage 3: A student is identified at APM Stage 3 if:

- that student has been previously identified at APM Stage 2;
- that student does not achieve two consecutive terms of satisfactory academic progress after they have been placed at APM Stage 2.

If a student proceeds through two stages of APM, they will be asked to demonstrate why their enrolment should not be cancelled.

**Identification of students at each APM stage**

6.13 For the purpose of identification of students at each APM stage the grades of Fail and Withdrawn Fail are regarded as Fails; all interim grades, e.g. SE, SA, are regarded as passing grades. When interim grades are finalised, this may trigger the identification of an APM stage where a student now meets relevant criteria.

6.14 Students are notified by the Course Coordinator in writing to both their personal and EIA email through EIA Student Management System (RTOManager) if they have been identified at one of the stages of APM. The notification details the steps that the students is required to take and the options available to them.

**APM Program**

6.15 APM Stage 1 (first instance)

1. A student who is identified at APM Stage 1 will receive an 'APM Stage 1 Warning Notification' via both the student's EIA email address and their personal email address. The notification indicates that the student is required to meet with the designated Course Coordinator for a mandatory APM Stage 1 intervention meeting within ten (10) working days.
2. A student must attend the APM Stage 1 intervention meeting within ten (10) working days from the date that notification has been sent. Students who do not attend an APM Stage 1 intervention meeting cannot use non-participation in APM intervention meeting as grounds for future appeal.
3. During the APM Stage 1 intervention meeting, an intervention strategy will be determined, and an AMP Stage 1 Intervention Agreement will be prepared by the Course Coordinator in consultation with the student. If deemed necessary, a professional counsellor or other parties may also be invited to be part of the intervention strategy. The student will enter into an EIA 'AMP Stage 1 Intervention Agreement' including recommended actions.
4. Examples of recommended Stage 1 Intervention actions include requirements for the student to:
  - attend academic or study skills programs;
  - maintain a minimum 80% attendance at scheduled classes in specified units;
  - attend counselling for managing personal, financial and other issues which may be affecting student progress;
  - participate in a mentoring program to improve student progress;
  - change course;

- reduce study load;
  - undertake any other recommended actions that assist the student to meet satisfactory academic progress, or
  - a combination of the above.
5. The Course Coordinator is responsible for keeping the APM Stage 1 Intervention Agreement recorded on the student's file.

#### 6.16 AMP Stage 2 (second instance)

1. A student who is identified at APM Stage 2 will receive an 'APM Stage 2 Warning Notification' and the 'Show Cause Student Response' form to explain why the student has demonstrated unsatisfactory academic progress via both the student's EIA email address and their personal email address. The notification indicates that the student is required to meet with the Academic Director for a mandatory APM Stage 2 intervention meeting within ten (10) working days and complete the Show Cause Student Response ' form with any supporting documentation and bring them to the meeting.
2. A student must attend the APM Stage 2 intervention meeting within ten (10) working days from the date that notification has been sent. Student who do not attend an APM Stage 2 intervention meeting cannot use non-participation in APM intervention meeting as grounds for future appeal.
3. During the APM Stage 2 intervention meeting, the EIA 'AMP Stage 1 Intervention Agreement' and the academic performance of the student during the period will be reviewed and discussed. The Academic Director will prepare an 'APM Stage 2 Intervention Agreement' in consultation with the student, taking into account the 'Show Cause Student Response' form completed by the student.
4. The 'APM Stage 2 Intervention Agreement' will include appropriate escalated interventions, including requirements for the students to:
  - attend academic or study skills programs;
  - maintain a minimum 80% attendance at scheduled classes in specified units;
  - attend counselling for managing personal, financial and other issues which may be affecting student progress;
  - participate in a mentoring program;
  - change course;
  - reduce study load;
  - undertake any other recommended actions that assist the students to meet satisfactory academic progress, or
  - a combination of the above.
5. The Academic Director is responsible for keeping the APM Stage 2 Intervention Agreement recorded on the student's file.

#### 6.17 APM Stage 3 – Intent to Cancel

1. A student who is identified at APM Stage 3 will be notified via email. This notice indicate that the student is required to "Show Cause" (provide reasons) why their enrolment should not be cancelled within ten (10) working days from the notification. A student must submit a 'Show Cause Response' form and attach any applicable supporting documentation to the 'Show Cause Response' form to support their application.
2. In addition to a written 'Show Cause' response, a student may be required to appear before a Student Progress and Examination Committee to explain their circumstances in support of their written submission.

3. Students may be accompanied by a support person to a Student Progress and Examination Committee meeting. A student may not send a representative in their place.
4. Where a student has been required to appear and fails to do so, the Student Progress and Examination Committee will make a decision in their absence.
5. Where a student has failed to submit a written 'Show Cause' response, the matter will be heard without the response.
6. The Student Progress and Examination Committee considers:
  - the 'Show Cause' response, and/or
  - the answers given by the student in the Student Progress and Examination Committee meeting where a student has been required to appear; and/or
  - documentation from the student file including the student's entire academic history and their response to APM Stage 1 and Stage 2

The Student Progress and Examination Committee decides if the student's enrolment is able to continue. A student is notified of the outcome of their 'Show Cause' and Student Progress and Examination Committee meeting in writing by the Academic Director.

7. The Student Progress and Examination Committee will not decide to cancel student's enrolment unless the student has been provided with the opportunity to appear before the Committee to "show cause".
8. If the outcome of 'Show Cause' and the Student Progress and Examination Committee meeting is successful, the student is able to continue with their enrolment and remain at APM Stage 2; otherwise the 'Intent to cancel' notification will be emailed to both the student's EIA email and personal email address.
9. A student is allowed twenty (20) working days to lodge an appeal from the date of 'Intent to Cancel' is sent.

### **Appeals (under this Policy)**

- 6.18 A student who wish to lodge an appeal must submit the EIA 'Student Complaints and Appeals Form' within the twenty (20) working days timeframe to the APM Appeals Panel which consists of the General Manager, the Chair of the Academic Board and one external member of the Academic Board.
- 6.19 A student can appeal their 'Intent to Cancel' decision on one or more of the following grounds:
  - Procedural grounds: the processes of APM as stipulated in this Policy were NOT followed; or
  - Procedural grounds: the accuracy of student's record or calculation on their marks; or
  - one term remaining (equivalent of four units for a higher education course);
  - Extenuating circumstance which must be substantiated by supporting documentation.
- 6.20 Extenuating circumstance include:
  - documented medical or allied health reasons, including disability;
  - compassionate or compelling reasons or other exceptional circumstances beyond the student's control.
- 6.21 Situations which would not normally be considered extenuating circumstance include:

- inability to cope with studies
  - inability to fit with demands of employment;
  - tension with or between parents, spouses and other close personal contacts;
  - social or sporting activities;
  - religious commitment;
  - financial pressure;
- 6.22 The internal appeal will be assessed by the APM Appeals Panel independent of the previous decision makers and those staff who administered and implemented APM progresses.
- 6.23 The student will be notified of the outcome of their appeal within ten (10) working days of the date that their appeal is lodged. The outcome will be emailed to both student's EIA email address and personal email address and will detail the reasons for the decision.
- 6.24 If the student internal appeal is successful, the student is able to continue with their enrolment and will be placed to APM Stage 2.
- 6.25 If the student internal appeal is unsuccessful, EIA will advise the student in writing in the outcome notification that they have the right to lodge an external appeal with the 'Overseas Students Ombudsman'. A student must inform the General Manager that they intend to lodge the external appeal within five (5) working days of the notification of the outcome of their internal appeal.
- 6.26 A student who wish to lodge an external appeal must do so within twenty (20) working days of the notification of the unsuccessful outcome of their internal appeal. The External Appeal process is detailed in the EIA Student Grievance, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure for Academic Matters.
- 6.27 The student must provide the General Management with an acknowledgement letter/notice from the designated External Appeal authority that the student has chosen to submit the External Appeal application as soon as possible, but no later than five (5) working days after the expiry of the twenty (20) working days appeal period. The student must also inform EIA immediately upon receiving the outcome of the 'External Appeal', or if the student decides to withdraw their 'External Appeal'.

### **Enrolment during Appeals**

- 6.28 A student may remain enrolled at EIA until the internal and/or external appeal process is complete.
- 6.29 International students who have an active Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) may choose to enrol in units whilst waiting appeal outcomes. If they so choose, they are considered an EIA student and are expected to attend all scheduled classes as appropriate and continue with their course of study. In this circumstance, the student will need to sign an Enrolment Agreement arranged by the General Manager. This Agreement specifies the academic, financial and potential visa implications should their appeals be unsuccessful.
- 6.30 International students will not be reported for unsatisfactory course progress until all appeals have been finalised.
- 6.31 The General Manager is responsible for keeping the Enrolment Agreement recorded on the student's file.
- 6.32 A student is not required to maintain enrolment in order to lodge an internal appeal. In the event that a student on an International student visa chooses not to enrol with EIA, they shall still be reported for cessation of studies to the Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS. Reporting of unsatisfactory academic progress may be applied at a later date as appropriate.

### **Cancellation and Reporting**

- 6.33 Cancellation of enrolment will only be actioned if:

- the student has not lodged an internal appeal within twenty (20) working days of the 'Intent to Cancel' notification.
  - the student withdraws from the appeals process
  - the internal appeal is not successful and the student has not notified EIA of their intention to submit an external appeal by the deadline as stipulated in this Policy.
  - the internal appeal is not successful and the student has not provided EIA with an acknowledgement receipt from the designated External Appeal authority within the deadline as stipulated in this Policy.
  - the external appeal is unsuccessful.
- 6.34 A copy of all documentation will be retained on the student's file.
- 6.35 For international students, EIA will notify the Secretary of Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS as soon as practically possible as the student not achieving satisfactory academic progress. Details of enrolment cancellation are reported to Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS.

### Maximum Period of Candidature

- 6.36 Students must meet the requirements of their course within a prescribed number of years from the date of their first enrolment. A maximum period is defined to ensure that the currency of knowledge and skills relevant to professional standards and practices are maintained in the qualification awarded.
- 6.37 The number of years allowed to complete a course, excluding periods of exclusion and lapsed candidature, is prescribed in this procedure, except where a different period is prescribed for a particular course and approved by the Academic Board.
- 6.38 International students must complete their studies within the course duration period specified on CRICOS and within the duration of their student visa. Any extensions beyond this period would require an extension of their Confirmation of Enrolment by EIA.
- 6.39 The study period begins on the date that students commence their first semester of study.

### Application for Extension of Maximum Candidature

In specific circumstances students may be granted an extension to their maximum period of candidature.

#### 6.40 Domestic students

Domestic students who fail to complete within the maximum candidature and who can reasonably be expected to meet the course requirements within two additional semesters of study may apply for an extension of the Confirmation of Enrolment with the Admissions and Enrolment Officer. Consideration of applications will be on a case-by-case basis and take account of the student's academic performance to date.

The application must be submitted at least one semester before the expiry of the student's prescribed period of candidature. Students must explain why they were unable to complete the course within the prescribed period in their application. The Admissions and Enrolment Officer will present individual applications to the Academic Director to be approved. Generally, an extension will be granted only where progress has been delayed due to circumstances beyond the student's control.

#### 6.41 International students

The Academic Director will approve an extension request for international students when and only when one or more of the following factors are satisfied:

- the presence of compassionate or other compelling reasons;

- an academic intervention strategy has been implemented or is being implemented under the provisions of this Policy;
- the existence of an approved deferral and/or suspension.

Once approval is granted, the decision will be communicated in writing to the student within ten (10) working days by the Admissions and Enrolment Officer. Students will be advised to contact the Department of Home Affairs to seek advice on any potential impact on their student visa. If an unfavourable decision is reached, students will be informed of their right to appeal the decision and reminded of the process for appeal.

### **Students who fail to complete within maximum candidature**

6.42 Students who are unable to complete the course requirements within the duration of any extension will have their enrolment terminated.

6.43 Students will be informed that they have exceeded the maximum allowed study period and will be given a final academic transcript. Students will be informed in writing of the decision and their right to appeal within twenty working days of the date shown on the letter or digital communication.

6.44 Students who discontinue their study or are excluded by EIA are eligible to receive their final academic transcript.

### **Consequences of exclusion**

6.45 Exclusion means that the student is not permitted to continue in a course or courses at EIA.

6.46 A student who is excluded by EIA due to unsatisfactory academic progress will not be permitted to apply for admission to any higher education course at EIA until at least one semester has elapsed since the exclusion. When they re-apply students will be asked to present evidence that, during their exclusion period, they have undertaken steps to improve the likelihood of achieving the minimum academic standards and completing their intended course.

### **Failing a Prerequisite Unit of the Course**

6.47 Students must complete any required prerequisite(s) before they can enrol in the subsequent unit as per EIA's course progression rules as outlined above. In the case where students have failed the prerequisite(s), and their course progress is adversely affected, they may seek a review in writing with the Course Coordinator detailing their course progress, reasons for failing and steps they will undertake for improvement and completion of the course.

6.48 The Course Coordinator will assess the students' academic record and decide if they are allowed to repeat the prerequisite unit concurrently with the subsequent unit.

6.49 Students will be informed of their right to appeal the decision and reminded of the process for appeal.

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Version Number	Amendments
1.1 (approved on 21/01/2020)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Added terms of reference for Student Progress and Examination Committee. Updated requirements for students to maintain satisfactory progress.</li> <li>2. Changed 6.1.3 wording to provide greater clarity.</li> <li>3. Clarified “at risk” in 6.1.3.</li> <li>4. Proofed ‘at risk’ definition. Added ‘at risk’ student intervention procedure.</li> </ol>
1.2 (approved on 19/05/2020)	Add requirements 6.2.6 and 6.4.3 to align the policy with the requirements of National Code 2018 standard 8.14 and 8.16.
1.3	Change company name to Edvantage Institute Australia (EIA).
2.0	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provision of clarity to the record keeping responsibility and accountability for all correspondence sent and received under this policy;</li> <li>2. Addition of instructive and clear steps as to how actions in each APM stage are carried out, specifically, how students are notified and what they need to do when they are identified for an APM stage.</li> <li>3. Provision of greater clarity as to how and when students are identified as not demonstrating satisfactory academic progress.</li> <li>4. Provision of further information about the internal and external appeal against an Intention to Cancel notification and the student enrolment arrangement whilst waiting for the outcome of appeals.</li> </ol>