

# Academic Progress - Unsatisfactory Academic Progress Procedure

(TWEEK!DM)

## Section 1 - Purpose / Objectives

(1) See Academic Progress Regulations .

## Section 2 - Scope / Application

(2) This procedure applies to:

- a. All students of Victoria University enrolled in higher education coursework programs, onshore and offshore.

(3) This procedure does not apply to:

- a. Students enrolled in higher degrees by research programs.
- b. Vocational Education students.
- c. Further Education students, including ELICOS students.
- d. Study Abroad and Exchange students.

## Section 3 - Definitions

(4) Notice in writing: Notice in writing is considered to be discharged by an email sent to a student's VU email address. Letters may be sent as inline text within the body of an email, or as an attachment to an email.

## Section 4 - Policy Statement

(5) See [Academic Progress - Student Retention and Success Policy](#)

## Section 5 - Procedures

### Part A - Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Assessments and Completions	Responsible for identifying students who are making unsatisfactory progress
Student Services	Responsible for sending letters to identified students
Unsatisfactory Progress Panel (UPP)	Responsible for determining the appropriate course of action for students who are making unsatisfactory progress.

VU International	Responsible to report unsatisfactory progress through the ESOS requirements
Enrolment Unit	Responsible for processing any changes to the student's enrolment as decided by the UPP
Deans	Responsible for nominating a pool of senior academic staff from which a UPP Chair can be selected.
Dean of Students	Responsible for reviewing unsatisfactory progress decisions.

## Part B - Determination of unsatisfactory progress

(6) At the end of each compulsory teaching period, following confirmation of results, all students' progress will be assessed to identify whether they are making satisfactory progress.

(7) A student will be deemed to not be making satisfactory progress if they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- a. Fail 50% or more of the units they were enrolled in for the study period; or
- b. Fail the same unit more than once.

## Part C - First time unsatisfactory progress

(8) Students who make unsatisfactory progress for the first time will be advised in writing of:

- a. Why they have received the letter;
- b. Support services available to assist them;
- c. A requirement to engage in an intervention activity, with the activity to be determined by the relevant College;
- d. What the next steps are if their progress does not improve in the next compulsory study period.
- e. The fact that they are at risk of being excluded for not making satisfactory course progress

(9) The purpose of the letter is:

- a. To ensure that students are provided with information about learning supports, resources and assistance;
- b. To inform students of their responsibility to take the required action to obtain personalised support; and
- c. To notify the student that repeated unsatisfactory progress in future will result in further steps, including a requirement to attend an unsatisfactory progress panel.

(10) By virtue of the sending of the letter, students will be deemed to have been advised that they have made unsatisfactory progress for the first time. They are also deemed to have been provided with an intervention strategy by virtue of the instructions provided in the letter of contact.

(11) The student's response to the notification letter will be recorded in the relevant system.

(12) If the student does not respond to the notification, the University will attempt to follow up with reminders of the need to take action.

## Part D - Second time unsatisfactory progress

(13) A student who has made unsatisfactory progress in the next consecutive compulsory teaching period for failure of 50% or more units, or the next opportunity to study the unit for repeated failure of a single unit, will be required to attend an unsatisfactory progress panel.

(14) The student will be advised in writing of -

- a. The fact that they appear to have made unsatisfactory progress in two consecutive compulsory study periods or in two attempts at the same unit;
- b. The details of why they have been deemed to have made unsatisfactory progress for the second time;
- c. The details of any previous intervention strategies;
- d. The time, date and place of the unsatisfactory progress panel;
- e. Their right to seek advice and assistance with preparing for the panel hearing from a Student Advocate and / or bring a support person who cannot be a legal practitioner;
- f. Who will be on the panel and the process to be followed;
- g. Their right to bring any relevant documentation;
- h. The fact that if they cannot attend the scheduled panel, they can contact the University to schedule another time.
- i. The fact that if they fail to attend without any prior notification, the panel will still meet to consider their progress and may issue any of the determinations available to it in their absence.

### **Composition of Unsatisfactory Progress Panel (UPP)**

(15) College Deans will nominate a pool of senior academic staff from which a UPP Chair can be selected.

#### **Onshore Progress Committee:**

- a. A Chair, who must not be involved in the student's program;
- b. Another academic staff member from the College (this may be the Course Coordinator or equivalent, or a staff member involved in teaching the course); and
- c. A member of the Academic Support Services team.

(16) In the case of a student studying a double degree, the Panel must have representation from both Colleges.

#### **Offshore Progress Committee:**

- a. A Chair who is the Discipline Leader or the equivalent person in the offshore institution nominated by the Dean of the relevant VU College;
- b. The VU Program Coordinator or a member of the VU teaching staff who teaches in the program nominated by the Dean;
- c. A member of the teaching staff of the offshore institution who teach in the program.

### **Unsatisfactory Progress Panel**

(17) The role of the UPP is to determine the appropriate course of action in respect of the student's ongoing study at VU.

(18) At the UPP meeting, the panel will ask the student to explain:

- a. why they believe their academic progress has been unsatisfactory
- b. evidence of what actions they have taken to date to improve their performance
- c. evidence of how they believe they can make satisfactory progress in future study, and
- d. how their actions to date and future intentions mean that they should be allowed to continue in their course.

This may be done verbally or in writing.

(19) Determinations that the UPP may make include:

- a. Continuation in the program without conditions.
- b. Creation of a mandatory Academic Performance Improvement Plan, which may include:
  - i. A direction for the student to reduce their enrolment load, subject to ESOS and other requirements.
  - ii. A direction to undertake a specific study program for a specified period of time to assist a student's progress (conditional enrolment).
  - iii. Identification of support strategies to enhance the student's progress.
- c. Attaching terms and conditions on the student's continuing enrolment.
- d. For non-international students, permission to take Intermission.
- e. For international students, the UPP can make a determination of permitting the student to take intermission if there are compelling or compassionate circumstances.
- f. A direction that the student enrol in a more suitable course, stream, or major.
- g. A direction that the student withdraw from one portion of a double degree if satisfactory progress is being made in one area but not the other.
- h. Agreement with the student that he / she withdraw from the course.

(20) The UPP may recommend that the student will be suspended or excluded from their course of study if it:

- a. determines that a student's explanation for their unsatisfactory progress is not adequate, or
- b. has reason to believe that academic progress recovery is unlikely despite implementation of an intervention strategy; and
- c. is satisfied that there has been no administrative error relating to the recording of results; and
- d. there are no compelling or compassionate reasons for the student's failure to make satisfactory progress.

(21) If a student has appeared before an UPP for a second or subsequent time, an outcome other than a recommendation for suspension or exclusion will only be considered on compassionate or compelling grounds.

(22) If a student has been found to be making unsatisfactory progress by the UPP, the University will report this to the Commonwealth government in accordance with ESOS regulations.

### **Determinations other than suspension or exclusion**

(23) The UPP is delegated to make final determinations on interventions other than:

- a. The decision to suspend a student; and
- b. The decision to exclude the student.

(24) The UPP may issue a binding determination on any available course of action at or immediately following the meeting.

### **Recommendations to suspend or exclude**

(25) A recommendation by the UPP to terminate or suspend a student's enrolment will be considered by the Dean of the relevant College.

(26) The Dean must satisfy themselves the recommendation is warranted in all the circumstances and that the process was appropriately followed.

(27) Following consideration, the Dean may:

- a. Endorse the recommendation;
- b. Refer the matter back to the UPP for reconsideration; or

- c. Decline to enact the recommendation of the UPP.

## **Notification**

- (28) Students will, wherever possible, be advised of the decision of the UPP at the panel's conclusion.
- (29) Students will be asked to sign a statement that they understand the decision.
- (30) Where the UPP recommends an outcome not leading to suspension or exclusion, the student will be notified in writing, with a clear statement of any conditions on ongoing enrolment imposed by the UPP.
- (31) Where the UPP recommends exclusion or suspension, the student will be informed in writing of the final decision following confirmation by the Dean.
- (32) The notification will be provided to the student's VU email address. A copy of the letter of notification, and any Academic Performance Improvement Plans or other agreements, must be lodged on the student's file.
- (33) Where the student being suspended or excluded is an international student, VU International and VU College must also be provided with a copy of the letter of notification.
- (34) Enrolment actions must not take place until the end of the period allowed for appeal, so that the student remains enrolled during the appeal.
- (35) Where the Dean confirms a decision of exclusion or suspension, the Enrolment Unit will be informed to enact the changes to the student's enrolment, in accordance with clause 34.
- (36) Where exclusion is the final decision, a student will be informed that, should they wish to return to study at VU, they will need to re-apply and that their exclusion may be taken into account in future selection decisions.

## **Reviews and Appeals**

### **Reviews**

- (37) Students who are dissatisfied with a decision of the UPP/Dean may request to have the decision reviewed by the Dean of Students.
- (38) Requests for a review must be made in writing within 5 University business days of the decision of the UPP.
- (39) The Dean of Students will review decisions to determine whether the decision was appropriate in all the circumstances and that the process was followed.
- (40) The Dean of Students may:
  - a. Confirm the decision;
  - b. Refer the matter back to the UPP for reconsideration; or
  - c. Decline to enact the decision of the UPP.

- (41) Students will be notified in writing of the outcome of their review within 5 University business days of the lodgement of the request for review.

### **Appeals**

- (42) Students who wish to appeal a decision after review by the Dean of Students may do so in accordance with [Student Appeals Regulations](#).

(43) Decisions to terminate or suspend enrolment will come into effect after the allowable period for lodging an appeal (20 University business days) has lapsed, or after the conclusion of the appeal process if an appeal is lodged.

## **Section 6 - Guidelines**

(44) Nil

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
<b>Effective Date</b>	13th January 2016
<b>Review Date</b>	13th September 2018
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Vice-Chancellor
<b>Approval Date</b>	13th January 2016
<b>Expiry Date</b>	19th June 2016
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