

Academic Progress - Unsatisfactory Academic Progress Procedure (HE)

Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Procedure outlines the process by which Victoria University (VU) will monitor and manage academic progress for students enrolled in higher education coursework.

(2) This Procedure is governed by the [Academic Progress Regulations 2016](#) and should be read in conjunction with that document.

Section 2 - Accountability

Accountable / Responsible Officer	Role
Accountable Officer	Pro Vice-Chancellor, Students
Responsible Officer	Director, Student Administration

Section 3 - Scope

(3) This Procedure applies to:

- a. all onshore VU students enrolled in higher education coursework courses;
- b. all offshore VU students enrolled in higher education coursework courses (subject to any local legislative requirements).

(4) This Procedure does not apply to:

- a. students enrolled in higher degrees by research courses;
- b. Vocational Education students;
- c. Further Education students, including English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) students;
- d. non-award courses;
- e. study abroad and exchange students.

Section 4 - Definitions

(5) Block

(6) Exclude - Means to terminate a student's enrolment.

(7) Notice in Writing

(8) Compulsory Study Period - Both semester/trimester 1 and semester/trimester 2 are compulsory study periods for the purposes of this Procedure.

Section 5 - Policy/Regulation

(9) [Academic Progress Regulations 2016](#)

Section 6 - Procedures

Part A - Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Student Administration(Assessments and Completions)	Identify students who are making unsatisfactory progress and issuing notifications to students. Process any changes to individual student's enrolments as determined by the procedure or the Show Cause Panel.
Student Administration(international enrolments team)	Report unsatisfactory progress in accordance with The Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS) requirements.
Student Administration(Enrolments)	Lift unit restrictions when approved by student advisor.
Support person	Provide support to the student but does not actively participate in the process.
Student Services – Student Advocate	Provide advocacy, advice and assistance to the student throughout the process.
Student Services – Student Advisor	A professional staff member who provides advice and referrals to support student success.

Part B - Assessing Academic Progress

(10) The University will regularly assess students' academic results to determine whether they are making satisfactory progress.

(11) Academic progress will be assessed at the end of each compulsory teaching period. Units undertaken in summer (Semester 3) will be included in the Semester/Trimester 1 progress period, and those undertaken in winter (Semester 4) will be included in the Semester/Trimester 2 progress period. Students studying in Block teaching periods will also have their progress assessed twice per year, at the same time as those studying in standard semesters.

Part C - Unsatisfactory Progress Process

Overview of Unsatisfactory Progress Process

(12) In order to maintain satisfactory academic progress, students must not:

- fail 50% or more of the units they were enrolled in for the study period; and/or
- fail the same unit more than once.

(13) Where a student fails to maintain satisfactory progress for the first time, they will be considered to be "at risk" of unsatisfactory progress. Students at risk of unsatisfactory progress will be offered a range of academic support options, including the development of an individualised academic action plan.

(14) Where a student fails to maintain satisfactory progress for the second time they will be advised in writing of the pre-defined outcomes, which will automatically apply.

(15) Where a student fails to maintain satisfactory progress for the third time, they will be considered to have made unsatisfactory progress in their course and may be excluded from it. The student will be given an opportunity to explain (i.e. "show cause") why this should not occur before a decision is made.

(16) Each of the three stages is set out in more detail below.

First Time - Notification of being at Risk of Unsatisfactory Progress

(17) Where a student fails to maintain satisfactory progress for the first time, they will be advised in writing that they are at risk of making unsatisfactory progress in their course.

(18) The letter will contain information about:

- a. why they have received the letter;
- b. the variety of learning and other support services available to students;
- c. the requirement that they arrange a time to meet with a student advisor so that they can develop an academic action plan to help improve their academic performance;
- d. what will happen if they fail to meet the satisfactory progress requirements for a second time; and
- e. who to contact if they have queries.

(19) The purpose of the letter is to:

- a. ensure that students are provided with information about learning supports, resources and assistance;
- b. inform students of their responsibility to take the required action; and
- c. notify the student of what action the University will be taking and what this will mean for the student.

Academic Action Plan

(20) The aim of an academic action plan is to ensure that students are aware of the learning and other supports that are available, how these can be accessed, and of any other measures which can assist students in improving their academic performance.

(21) Students are expected to arrange a time to meet with a student advisor so that a personalised academic action plan can be developed. The plan will identify actions intended to help the student make satisfactory academic progress in the next study period. The academic action plan will be agreed to by both parties and a copy placed on the student's file.

(22) Where a personalised academic action plan is not developed (e.g. where a student does not engage with a student advisor), a student will be deemed to have been provided with an intervention plan by virtue of the instructions and academic support options detailed in the notification letter.

(23) The academic progress status of each student will be recorded in the student management system.

Second Time - Failure to Maintain Satisfactory Progress

(24) Where a student fails to maintain satisfactory progress for a second time, they will be advised in writing of the

pre-defined outcomes, which will automatically apply. In particular:

- a. where a student fails 50% or more of their units for a second time, they will be advised that they are required to meet with a student advisor to create another academic action plan; and
- b. where a student fails the same unit a third time, the student will not be allowed to re-enrol in that unit unless an agreed academic action plan has been developed.

(25) Students will also be advised:

- a. how to arrange to meet with a student advisor to discuss support options and the development of an academic action plan;
- b. what will happen if they fail to meet the satisfactory progress requirements for a third time; and
- c. who to contact if they have queries.

Third Time - Failure to Maintain Satisfactory Progress - Exclusion from Course

(26) Where a student fails to maintain satisfactory progress for the third time, they will be considered to have made unsatisfactory progress in their course.

(27) Where a student has made unsatisfactory progress, they will be notified in writing that they may be excluded from their course.

(28) Before a decision to exclude a student for unsatisfactory progress is made, they will be given an opportunity to be explain (i.e. "show cause") why this should not occur. If a student does not elect to show cause in the required timeframe and as outlined below, Assessments and Completions team will notify them that:

- a. they have been deemed to have made unsatisfactory progress in their course;
- b. that VU intends to exclude them from their course; in the case of international students, that VU intends to report them to the Commonwealth Government for unsatisfactory progress;
- c. when the exclusion will take effect; and
- d. their right to access the appeal process described below.

(29) Where the student being excluded is an international student, the international enrolment team and VU College must be provided with a copy of the letter of notification.

Show Cause Panel Meetings

(30) A student may elect to explain why they should not be excluded from a course by attending a 'Show Cause Panel' (SCP) meeting (referred to as the Unsatisfactory Progress Panel in the [Academic Progress Regulations 2016](#)).

(31) A student will be given ten working days to advise the University that they intend to attend the SCP.

(32) Where a student attends the SCP meeting, they should bring all supporting documentation that they intend to rely upon. They may also bring a support person and/or be assisted with the preparation and presentation of their case by a student advocate. If the student has a reason for being unable to attend in person, an alternative arrangement can be requested (for example, participation via telephone or video link). If the student does not wish to attend they may submit written information.

(33) If the student elects to attend but is subsequently unavailable to attend at the designated time, the student will be given the option to provide a written statement for consideration by the panel. The meeting time will not be re-scheduled unless approved by the Chair.

(34) Having reviewed the student's circumstances, the SCP must consider the student's explanation of their circumstances. The SCP must then satisfy themselves that the proposed exclusion decision is warranted in the circumstances.

(35) Where the SCP does not consider exclusion to be appropriate, the SCP may:

- a. allow the student to continue without conditions if this is justified in all of the circumstances;
- b. impose a condition or conditions on the student's continued enrolment; or
- c. require the student to transfer into a different course.

(36) The condition or conditions on enrolment that the SCP may impose include, but are not limited to:

- a. a direction for the student to reduce their study load or take intermission (domestic students only); or
- b. a direction to undertake a specific study program for a specified period of time to assist a student's progress (conditional enrolment) or
- c. a direction that the student enrol in a more suitable course, stream or major, or
- d. a direction that the student engages in appropriate support strategies to enhance the student's progress.

Composition of Show Cause Panel (SCP)

(37) College Deans will nominate a pool of senior academic staff from which the SCP can be selected. SCPs will consist of at least two members.

(38) Onshore panel members should be senior academics with knowledge of the course. In the case of a student studying a double degree or units from the First Year College, the Panel must have representation from both Colleges.

(39) Offshore Panels should consist of the Discipline Leader or the equivalent person in the offshore institution nominated by the Dean of the relevant VU College, and a senior academic from VU or the VU Site Coordinator.

Show Cause Notification

(40) Students will be notified in writing of the outcome of their review by the SCP within five working days of the SCP meeting.

(41) The student will be notified of the SCP decision in writing.

(42) The notification will be provided to the student's VU email address and will be kept on the student's file within the student system.

(43) Where the student being excluded is an international student, the international enrolment team and VU College must be provided with a copy of the letter of notification.

(44) Any academic encumbrances placed on the student's record must not be enforced until the end of the University appeal process. A student's enrolment record must continue to have a status of inactive or enrolled during this time.

(45) Where the college confirms a decision of exclusion, Assessments and Completions will be informed to enact the changes to the student's enrolment, following the internal appeal process (see clause (47) below).

(46) Where exclusion is the final decision the student will be informed that, should they wish to return to study at VU, they will not be re-admitted into the same course for at least 12 months, and that they must be able to demonstrate an improved likelihood of success.

(47) If the outcome of the SCP process is not finalised before the census date of the subsequent teaching period, the

student's cancellation will be back-dated to before census date and the student will receive a full refund of the semester's fees.

Appeals

(48) Students who wish to appeal an exclusion decision or an alternative outcome determined by the SCP may do so in accordance with the [Student Appeals Regulations 2019](#).

(49) Student exclusions 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 7 - Guidelines

(50) Nil

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	22nd December 2017
Review Date	22nd December 2020
Approval Authority	Vice-President (Infrastructure and Students)
Approval Date	21st December 2017
Expiry Date	16th February 2020
Accountable Officer	Lisa Line Deputy Vice-Chancellor Enterprise and Digital Lisa.Line@vu.edu.au
Responsible Officer	Darrel Caulfield Chief Student Officer and Registrar darrel.caulfield@vu.edu.au
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Block" - A delivery period in which all learning activities and assessments, moderation and result release in units of study are completed within: Four-weeks for all undergraduate units, and postgraduate units in the Colleges of Arts & Education, Health & Biomedicine, Law & Justice and Sport & Exercise Science; or Eight-weeks for postgraduate units in the VU Business School and College of Engineering & Science and units/courses delivered through VU Online.

"Notice in Writing" - Notice in writing will include sending an email to a student's VU email address.