Student Retention and Success Policy

Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Policy expresses VU's commitment to maximising student retention and success at every stage of learning. It explains VU’s approach to upholding that commitment and it enables focused efforts across the entire University.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Policy applies to students in all study levels and modes at VU including Foundation, Vocational, Higher Education, Postgraduate and Research across all campuses.

a. Students studying at offshore and other partner locations may receive additional localised support services from partner institutions or third-party organisations as appropriate.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(3) VU believes that student retention and success are the responsibility of the entire VU community, including students themselves.

(4) As a multi-sector university, VU recognises the value of a highly diverse student cohort and the need to support all of our students to achieve their educational goals.

Commitment to Equality and Inclusion

(5) A key measure of student success and satisfaction is retention and the University’s retention initiatives and strategies are designed to address the needs of all students from all equity groups.

(6) VU will provide flexible entry and exit points and appropriate pathways and foundation courses to students. VU will guide and assist students to see the relevance of their study to their future careers and/or aspirations, and the needs of the communities to which they belong in order to foster a sense of purpose and commitment to their own success.

(7) The One VU model includes the commitment to provide specific consideration to the recruitment, admission, participation and completion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Supportive Learning Environment

(8) VU recognises the importance of high-quality education at all study levels with all students supported by comprehensive orientation and transition programs, effective interventions and data-driven retention initiatives that assist students to set and achieve their goals.

(9) VU will:

a. Deliver well-structured, multi-faceted orientation program and study-readiness programs; and
b. Strive to ensure that all student administrative and service processes are efficient, well communicated and

user-friendly; and

c. Provide flexible, high-quality support services and resources, including advice on accessing social supports where indicated;
d. Promote and support peer programs and networks among students; and
e. Recognise and accept its responsibility to support students' academic and learning success from the outset of their VU experience to the completion of their studies.

(10) VU continuously monitors, reviews and reports on strategies to eradicate the challenges our students face and commits to ensuring that all students are supported to meet those challenges via proactive and targeted early interventions.

Student Engagement and Belonging

(11) VU recognises that early and positive engagement with students is essential for fostering a sense of belonging to VU, helping them to build the confidence necessary for retention and success and, accordingly, provides appropriate accurate, timely and useful information to students and prospective students across a range of platforms.

(12) VU acknowledges that the quality of a student's experience, and their desire to remain with VU, depends not only on good teaching, but on functional administrative systems, adequate student support, access to appropriate learning resources and extra-curricular opportunities and activities that foster a sense of belonging, and commits to providing high quality, accessible services to meet all of these needs.

Academic Learning and Success

(13) VU will provide support for academic and learning success in the following ways:

a. The design and provision of academic support programs and the provision of targeted and integrated learning support in TAFE;
b. Investment in long-term course development and ongoing evaluation based on evidence from student feedback, graduate career outcomes, data and relevant industry feedback where appropriate;
c. Integrating developmental education into HE curriculum design;
d. Analysing student progression in relation to course and training composition and curriculum design;
e. Implementing early intervention strategies for students identified as being potentially at risk academically or in other ways, based on accurate data analytics, staff and/or student feedback;
f. Conducting Individual Pre-Training Reviews for VE students which determine additional support needs, learning and vocational goals;
g. Investing in continuing and appropriate professional development for all academic, professional and TAFE staff; and,
h. Recognising the value of a culture of success and working to create this amongst both students and staff. This will be reflected in:
    i. Recognition and acknowledgement of students who are making good progress with their studies, with the form of recognition at the discretion of each HE College, TAFE College or equivalent organisational unit; and
    ii. Success-oriented academic progress model predicated on the idea that progression and completion should be the expectation of and by every student; and
    iii. Provision of supports for students who enter the academic progress process, with an expectation that the progress process will enable them to resume normal academic progression as a result; and
    iv. Development of a Learning Support Plan for VE students as required to guide their learning progress; and
    v. Fair and transparent academic progress process that is communicated appropriately to students.

(14) The following policies, procedures, frameworks and channels form part of this Policy and provide detail to give practical effect to the policy principles:

Focus Area	Legislation/Procedure	Student Supports
Admission and Selection	Student Retention and Success - VET Learning Support Procedure Admissions - Course Admissions and Pre-Training Review Procedure (VET) Admissions - English Language Admission Requirements Procedure Admissions Procedure Higher Degrees by Research Admissions Procedure Credit - Academic Credit Procedure (HE) Credit - Skills Recognition Procedure (VET)	Credit for Skills and Past Study
Orientation and Transition	Safety and Welfare of Children and Young People - International Student Welfare Procedure Student Groups Leadership and Representation - Student Group Establishment, Affiliation and Funding Procedure Student Clinics Procedure Higher Degrees by Research Policy Credit - Pathways Procedure Work Integrated Learning Procedure (HE) Work Integrated Learning - Practical Placement Procedure (VET) Courses Lifecycle - Course Cessation and Student Transition (HE) Procedure Courses Lifecycle - Course Cessation and Student Transition (VET) Procedure Support for Students Policy	Orientation Pathways to VU First Year College VU Employ Student Mentors
Enrolment	Enrolments Procedure Enrolments - Monitoring Attendance Procedure (International Foundations and ELICOS) Higher Degrees by Research Enrolments Procedure	
Academic Success, Curriculum & Learning	Academic Progress Regulations 2016 Academic Progress Procedure (HE) Academic Progress - ELICOS Procedure Academic Progress - Foundations Studies Procedure Academic Progress Procedure (VET) Elite Sport and Performer Policy Higher Degrees by Research Progress Procedure Student Retention and Success - VET Learning Support Procedure Scholarships - Higher and Vocational Education Procedure Academic Integrity Guidelines Courses Lifecycle - Inherent Requirements of Study Procedure Support for Students Policy	Learning Hub Student Progress Student Mentors
Student Wellbeing and Inclusion	Student Equity and Social Inclusion Policy Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunity - Gender Affirmation Procedure Disability Action Plan 2026 - 2030 Student Mental Health Plan 2025 - 2027 Aboriginal Education and Cultural Equity Policy LGBTIQA + Gender Diverse Strategy 2020-2023 Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025 Brilliant Together Cultural Inclusion and Racial Equality Plan 2023-2026 Safety and Welfare of Children and Young People Procedure Safety and Welfare of Children and Young People - International Student Welfare Procedure Student Equity and Social Inclusion Policy Safety and Welfare of Children and Young People Procedure Support for Students Policy Gender-based Violence Policy	Advice and Support VU Employ Moondani Balluk Safety and Respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students Disability and Accessibility Services LGBTQI+ and Gender Diverse Inclusion Student Mentors

Focus Area	Legislation/Procedure	Student Supports
Curriculum Design, Learning and Assessment	Learning and Teaching Quality and Standards Framework Assessment for Learning - Assessment Procedure (VET) Assessment for Learning - Standards for Assessment Procedure (HE) Assessment for Learning - Moderation and Validation Procedure (HE) Assessment for Learning - Assessment Validation Procedure (VET) Assessment for Learning - Adjustments to Assessment Procedure (HE) Assessment for Learning - Assessment Procedure (VET) Courses Lifecycle - Annual Course Monitoring (HE) Procedure Courses Lifecycle - Comprehensive Course Review (HE) Procedure Courses Lifecycle - Award Course Design (HE) Procedure Courses Lifecycle - Continuous Improvement of Training and Assessment (VET) Procedure Courses Lifecycle - Higher Degrees by Research Annual Course Monitoring Procedure	

Section 4 - Procedures

(15) Student Retention and Success - VET Learning Support Procedure

Section 5 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS ALIGNMENT

(16) HESF: Standard 1.3 Orientation and Progression (specifically 1.3.2c; 1.3.4; 1.3.5); 2.2 Diversity and Equity.

(17) Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2025: Standard 1.1(b) Training; 1.7 Recognition of prior learning and credit transfer, 2.2 Information, 2.3 - 2.4 Training Support; 2.5 Diversity and Inclusion; Standard 2.6 Wellbeing; 4.4 Continuous Improvement.

(18) National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Cth): Standard 6 – Provision of access to support services to achieve expected learning outcomes.

(19) VRQA Guidelines for Non School Senior Secondary Education Providers: Standards 3 Student Welfare, 4 Student Records and Results; 5 Teaching and Learning.

Section 6 - Definitions

(20) Retention: Retention measures the number of students who return to study after an initial teaching period, whether that be a teaching block, semester or year.

(21) Success: The proportion of students who commence study at VU who successfully complete a course.

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