

COURSE PROGRESSION AND INTERVENTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION

The College monitors student progression to provide timely interventions and appropriate support, and to ensure that students do not incur unnecessary debt. In the case of international students, course progression is also monitored to ensure that students complete their course within the expected duration.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to (a) define satisfactory and unsatisfactory course progression; (b) specify how the College will intervene to support students not making satisfactory progress; and (c) notify the consequences of making unsatisfactory course progression.

3. SCOPE

The scope of this policy applies to all students enrolled in courses of study at the college.

4. DEFINITIONS

At-risk: a student whose academic performance places them at risk of unsatisfactory course progression. At Sydney Met, at-risk course progression is applied when a student has failed more than 50% of their enrolled units in a study period based on an equivalent full-time load OR has failed the same core unit twice.

Exclusion: Discontinuation of a student's enrolment at the College due to unsatisfactory course progression. The exclusion status for course progression has a duration of two years (24 months). During exclusion, the student will not be permitted to undertake any study at the College. Students excluded based on unsatisfactory progression who are studying on a student visa will be reported to the Department of Home Affairs through PRISMS.

Satisfactory Progression: Refers to progression which is on-track for completion within the standard course duration. Students are considered to be making satisfactory progress if they pass at least 50% of the units in which they are enrolled.

Unsatisfactory Progression: This refers to students identified as not progressing satisfactorily to complete the course in the expected duration. At Sydney Met students are considered to be making unsatisfactory course progression if they:

- had a course progression status of at-risk; and
- have continued to fail more than 50% of their enrolled units, and/or have failed the same core unit three times.

Intervention: A remedial strategy or plan of action to support a student formally identified as at-risk due to failing units.

Early Intervention: A remedial strategy or plan of action to support a student informally identified as at-risk due to poor attendance and/or failure to submit within trimester assessments and/or poor performance on within trimester assessments.

5. PRINCIPLES

This policy is based on the following principles:

- **Duty of Care.** The College has a duty of care toward the student, which means taking timely action to support students to successfully complete the units and courses they are enrolled in and minimizing the financial burden associated with paying fees to repeat failed units. For international students, it also means supporting students to complete their course within the terms of their COE.
- **Timeliness.** Formal course progression is based on grades approved for release by the Board of Examiners after each trimester. It is the responsibility of the Registrar to identify students at-risk following release of grades and to take appropriate action prior to the census date for the subsequent trimester. Informal course progression is based on poor attendance and/or failure to submit within trimester assessments and/or poor performance on within trimester assessments. It is the responsibility of student services staff to monitor these metrics and contact students for the purpose of early intervention.
- **Record-keeping and access to records.** The registrar maintains a Course Progression Register that is based on formal assessment of at-risk students and is updated after each Board of Examiner's meeting for the approval of release of grades. The Registrar reports to each Board of Examiner's on the progress of at-risk students. Such reporting is de-identified and all records that can identify students are confidential to maintain student privacy.

6. INFORMAL COURSE PROGRESSION

- Students are required to attend eighty percent (80%) of their classes, unless there are circumstances, such as documented health conditions, that justify lower attendance. Student Services staff collect attendance data at week 3 and week 5 to identify students for early intervention. Students experiencing challenging personal circumstances that may have led to the absenteeism are encouraged to contact the Student Counsellor as soon as practical to discuss their specific case¹

¹ The college has a Student Counsellor who is available on campus. Students may request to see the Counsellor for assistance with personal matters, that may include, but are not limited to, relationships, family issues, financial concerns, health concerns or other matters.

- Students with less than eighty (80%) percent attendance at week 3 are contacted by the Unit Co-Ordinator to discuss reasons for absence and resolve the issue if possible.
- If the attendance data at week 5 shows that attendance has not improved, or if, by week 5, students are identified as having failed to submit an assessment, or have failed an assessment, Student Services staff contact the student to offer support based on the individual case.

Some of the early intervention strategies to support students are:

- Counselling
- Attending extra tutorials
- Attending one on one sessions with a lecturer or tutor
- Attending additional group classes
- Attending a Peer Student Support (PSS) session (see below)
- Appointment of a student mentor
- Attending language support sessions
- Completing a declaration of attendance reform
- Agreeing to a specific Study Plan
- Agreeing to specific study achievement milestones
- Other academic measures as deemed necessary.

The steps the college takes when undertaking early intervention include, but are not limited to,

- contacting the student to ascertain the reasons for the lack of course progress.
- Discussing the course requirements and the Course Learning Outcomes, and the student's personal goals.
- In most cases, a study plan will be agreed with the student and signed by both the student and a College officer.
- The study plan will outline specific steps to be taken by the student and the College to improve and/or support student performance.
- The study plan will be implemented and monitored for progress. This may include weekly meetings with a College officer and/or undertaking weekly English language classes and/or academic writing classes provided free of charge for College students.
- Information about early intervention strategies is maintained on the student's record.
- Early intervention is implemented for a maximum of 10 (ten) weeks in total.

7. FORMAL COURSE PROGRESSION

To remain enrolled at Sydney Met students must maintain satisfactory course progression or participate in a formal intervention strategy. For international students studying on a student visa satisfactory progression also means maintaining a pass rate that enables the completion of the course within the terms of their COE. International students studying on a student visa who participate in an intervention strategy may have their COE extended if necessary. However, there may be limits to the extension of the COE.

Student performance is monitored by the Board of Examiners and the Registrar's Office when results are approved for each study period. Students whose progress has not been satisfactory are identified. The procedures involved for students who have been identified as at-risk, or as not making satisfactory progress, are as follows:

- Students identified as at-risk following the Board of Examiners are informed by the College that they must participate in an intervention strategy as prescribed by the Head of Department. Students who do not abide by the terms of an intervention strategy, study plan and/or other interventions to support course progression are informed in writing by the Registrar's Office that if they become eligible for formal unsatisfactory progression as defined above the College will report the lack of course progress to the Department of Home Affairs, and that this may have consequences for the student's visa.
- Students identified as meeting criteria for unsatisfactory course progression as defined above are informed by the Registrar's Office that they have been identified as making unsatisfactory course progression. Students will then be issued with an *Intent to Report Notice*. The enrolment of students who have received an *Intent to Report Notice* due to formal unsatisfactory course progression will be discontinued unless they successfully appeal this identification. Students whose enrolment is discontinued will be excluded from studying at the College for two years. International students studying on a student visa who make unsatisfactory course progression will be reported to the Department of Home Affairs

8. APPEALS

International students studying on a student visa who make unsatisfactory formal course progression may appeal their unsatisfactory progression status using the College's *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*. Such appeals will be assessed based on:

- * Compassionate or compelling circumstances
- * Extent of participation in the College's intervention strategy

Appeals must be submitted within twenty (20) working days of the date of the *Intention to Report* notification. Appeal submissions should contain as much relevant information as possible to help the College reach a decision, including:

- any compassionate or compelling reasons for the student's previous performance, supported by documentary evidence,
- any remedial action undertaken since the student was advised of the academic caution or of being at risk of unsatisfactory course progression, and
- how the student intends to improve their academic performance if permitted to continue their studies.

Students who submit an appeal application will be notified of the outcome within ten (10) working days. An Intervention is any remedial strategy or plan of action imposed by the Head of Discipline during a teaching study period on a student identified as having the course progression status of At-risk.