

ACADEMIC PROGRESSION, MONITORING & INTERVENTION POLICY

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1 Purpose

1.1 Context

This policy outlines the principles (and procedures) for academic progression at UBSS and the intervention strategies available to students experiencing difficulties in maintaining satisfactory progression.

2 Scope

2.1 Rationale

International and local students are required to maintain satisfactory academic progress to meet the requirements of their course of study and ensure appropriate learning outcomes. In addition, international students must meet their visa requirement that they complete their course within the period of their CoE.

2.2 Legislative Context

- The Higher Education Support Act (HESA)
- The Educational Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS): 2000

3 Definitions

Item	Definition
<i>Academic Warning</i>	An Academic Warning is a formal warning letter sent electronically to Students who fail to maintain satisfactory academic progress.
<i>Attendance</i>	<p>Attendance refers to students physically and regularly attending classes at the UBSS campus. An attendance rate during trimester periods of 80 percent or higher is strongly recommended as a key strategy for maintaining satisfactory academic progress.</p> <p>Attendance rates for each student are measured and stored on the MyGCA system. The data are collected by having students scan their identification card in classrooms at the beginning and end of each class. This includes Foundation students.</p>
<i>CoE</i>	<p>CoE: refers to Confirmation of Enrolment. Upon successful application to study in a course at UBSS, a student is granted a CoE that is valid typically for the maximum full-time duration of the course. CoE periods are reduced when an applicant has been granted Credit Transfer for previous studies.</p> <p>CoE periods for international students are not extended unless approved by the Dean based on relevant supporting evidence.</p>
<i>Intervention Strategies</i>	<p>Intervention Strategies refer to strategies adopted by UBSS to support students having difficulty making satisfactory academic progress. They include the provision of academic learning support and English language support to enhance academic knowledge and skills, as well as pastoral care or counselling when non-academic matters are identified as a major reason for students failing to make satisfactory progress.</p>
<i>Monitoring</i>	Monitoring refers to the active checking of course progress. The purpose is to allow UBSS to identify and offer support to students at risk of not progressing at a satisfactory pace. Students who are not making satisfactory course progress are reported to the Secretary of DE through PRISMS.
<i>Unsatisfactory Progress</i>	Unsatisfactory Progress is defined as not successfully completing or demonstrating competency in at least 50 percent of course requirements in a study period.
<i>Study Period</i>	A Study Period is the period required to complete a subject. It includes orientation period, the teaching period and the examination period. The maximum length of a study period is six months.

4 Monitoring

UBSS monitors and records the progress of each student in the course in which they are enrolled.

UBSS specifies the course requirements for each study period in the Trimester Timetable and implements procedures that enable it to identify students who have not passed or demonstrated competency in 50 percent or more of the course requirements.

UBSS assesses each student's progress at the end of each compulsory study period. It has an intervention strategy for students who are not making satisfactory course progress. The intervention strategy includes:

- Procedures for contacting and counselling students;
- Strategies to assist identified students to achieve satisfactory course progress;
- The process by which the intervention strategy is activated.

The intervention strategy includes provisions for:

- Where appropriate, advising students on their suitability for the course in which they are enrolled;
- Advising students of opportunities to be reassessed for assessment items in which they had failed, or to demonstrate the competency in areas where they had failed to demonstrate competency;
- Advising students that unsatisfactory course progress in two consecutive study periods could lead to the student being reported to DIBP and their visa being cancelled, depending on the outcome of any appeals process.

4.1 Assessment & Intervention

At the end of each compulsory study period, students are assessed against the course progress policy. If a student is identified for the first time as not making satisfactory course progress, the intervention strategy is implemented. The strategy is activated within the first four weeks of the following study period.

However, if a student is identified as at risk of making unsatisfactory course progress before the end of the study period, the intervention strategy is implemented as early as practicable.

If a student is identified as not making satisfactory course progress in a second consecutive compulsory study period, UBSS notifies the student of its intention to report the student to DIBP for unsatisfactory progress.

The written notice of intention to report the student for unsatisfactory progress informs the student that they are able to access the UBSS complaints and appeals process under Standard 8 of the National Code and that the student has 20 working days in which to do so. A student may appeal on the following grounds:

- Provider's failure to record or calculate a student's marks accurately;
- Compassionate or compelling circumstances;

- Where UBSS has not implemented its intervention strategy and other policies according to documented policies and procedures.

Where the student's appeal is successful, the outcomes vary according to the findings of the appeals process:

- If the appeal shows that there was an error in calculation, and that the student actually made satisfactory course progress (successfully completed more than 50 percent of the course requirements for that study period), UBSS does not report the student and there is no requirement for intervention;
- If the appeals process shows that the student has not made satisfactory progress, but there are compassionate or compelling reasons for this lack of progress, ongoing support is provided to the student through the UBSS Intervention strategy, and UBSS does not report the student.

UBSS notifies the Secretary of the Department of Education (DE) through PRISMS as soon as practicable that the student is not achieving satisfactory course progress, where;

- The student has chosen not to access the complaints and appeals processes within the 20 working day period; or
- The student withdraws from the process; or
- The process is completed and results in a decision supporting UBSS (i.e., the student's appeal was unsuccessful).

4.2 Acknowledgements

UBSS acknowledges the following regulatory and legislative guidance provisions:

The National Code 2018

The ESOS Act the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000

4.3 Procedures

UBSS has procedures in place for assessing satisfactory course progress and determining any points at which the student has failed to make satisfactory progress.

Note from Standard 10: *Ten weeks is usually considered the minimum length of time in which it is reasonable for the provider to make an assessment of a student's course progress. For the purposes of this policy, the maximum length for a study period is six months. Where a provider does not divide courses into study periods, course progress must be monitored at least every six months.*

To ensure fairness, and to ensure transparency, UBSS uses the following process for determining the points at which the student may have failed to make satisfactory course progress:

The **Dean** monitors and assesses course progress of students by:

- Reviewing attendance records;
- Reviewing class participation;

- Evaluating any mid-course assessments;
- Reviewing the final assessment;
- Checking overall competency.

All lecturers and the **Dean** are required to record and assess the progress of each student at the end of each trimester in order to identify students at risk of not progressing.

If the **Dean** identifies a learner as being at risk of not meeting their course progress requirements, the **Dean** provides an appropriate Early Intervention Strategy.

UBSS has procedures in place for designing and implementing intervention strategies to assist students at risk of failing to achieve satisfactory course progress.

If a student is identified as being at risk of not completing the course in the required time or of failing to meet the required 50 percent completion rate in a study period, the following process is followed:

- a) The student is contacted by letter or email requesting that they meet with the Dean to develop a strategy to ensure that the student maintains satisfactory course progress;
- b) The Early Intervention Strategy is implemented.

UBSS has procedures in place for notifying students of unsatisfactory progress in two consecutive study periods

If a student is identified as failing to meet the required 50 percent completion rate in two consecutive study periods, the following process is followed:

- c) A Warning Letter (*Warning Letter 2 to Student - Intent to Report*) is drafted with the relevant details of the student's situation;
- d) The **Dean** reviews the letter, approves it and authorises it to be sent; A copy of all correspondence is put on the student's file;
- e) The **Dean** may contact the student within four working days of sending the letter, by phone and/or email, to ensure that they have received the letter;
- f) The **Dean** notes and sets a reminder in a calendar when 20 working days have elapsed and then checks if an Appeal has been lodged;

If no appeal has been lodged, the **Dean** reports the student's breach of the required completion rate condition on PRISMS;

If an appeal has been lodged, the appeals process begins.

UBSS has procedures for reporting students who are not making satisfactory course progress, and therefore in breach of their visa requirements, to DE/DoHA

The following process is followed when reporting a student for breach of their visa requirements due to unsatisfactory course progress (Refer to the "PRISMS - Provider User Guide" for assistance in the following process):

- a) If an appeal is lodged, wait until the appeal is heard and finalised before progressing;
- b) If no appeal is lodged or an appeal has been lodged and is not upheld, the Academic Dean advises the Student Services Manager of intent to record the breach on PRISMS;
- c) The **Dean** checks all the facts and documentation related to the case and, when everything is in order, authorises the report to be entered into PRISMS;

- d) The Student Services team follows “PRISMS - Provider User Guide” to report the breach.

4.4 Reporting

Reporting a student for unsatisfactory course progress occurs only when the student has been identified as not making satisfactory course progress in two consecutive compulsory study periods, and the student has not made a successful appeal against this assessment.

If a student is identified for a second, but not consecutive, study period as not making satisfactory course progress, the provider does not report the student for unsatisfactory course progress.

When a student is reported for unsatisfactory course progress DoHA may cancel the student’s visa. DoHA relies on the provider’s report of unsatisfactory course progress, and the report cannot be made until the provider has completed the complaints and appeals process. Students who are dissatisfied with the provision of a complaints and appeals process may lodge a complaint with the Department of Education

Section 19(2) of the ESOS Act 2000 requires providers to report the student for unsatisfactory course progress ‘as soon as practicable’ after the breach occurs. Good practice would be to report the student through PRISMS within five days of finalising the decision to report.

4.5 Student Failure to Meet Course Requirements Key Requirements for All Sectors:

The progress of each student is monitored, recorded and assessed.

- a) The provider has documented course progress policies and procedures.
- b) The provider assesses each student at the end point of each study period according to its course progress policy.
- c) The provider has an intervention strategy that identifies and assists students who are at risk of not making satisfactory course progress.

Where a provider has assessed the student as not meeting satisfactory course progress, the provider informs the student in writing of its intention to report the student and that he or she is able to access the provider’s complaints and appeals process within 20 working days.

- a) The provider notifies the Secretary of DEEWR through PRISMS of the student not achieving satisfactory progress after the appeals process (if actioned) is finalised and upholds the provider’s decision to report.
- b) The CoE must have a status of ‘Studying’, ‘Cancelled’, ‘Finished’ or ‘Reported On’ for students to select this Student Course.

4.6 Variation reason

Students must enter a response to each of the Appeals Processing prompts as well as responding to the other prompts that students will be presented with when processing this Student Course Variations (SCV) option.

On-screen 'Help' is available by clicking on the book icon at the front of each prompt.

In the SCV Comments field, enter any comments that may be appropriate. These comments will NOT appear on the non-compliance letter (the Section 20 notice) – they are for the students information only.

This SCV reason results in the non-compliance letter being generated for the to be sent to the Student.

The letter contains particulars of the breach and provides options as to the actions required to be taken by the student. Generally speaking, the student is required to attend in person before a DoHA officer within 28 days after the date the non-compliance letter was issued.

Once Student Support Staff have completed the SCV the CoE status will change to 'Cancelled' and DoHA will be sent the code selected, as well as Student Support Staff responses to the 'Appeals' processing prompts.

Student Support Staff should report using this variation as soon as practicable.

4.7 Procedure for deviating from the DE-DoHA Course Progress Policy and Procedures

In the event that UBSS chooses to deviate from the DE-DoHA Course Progress Policy the following should be followed:

When UBSS no longer wishes to follow the DE-DoHA Course Progress Policy, it registers the change in PRISMS by changing the answer in the relevant field to 'No';

A record is kept in PRISMS if UBSS chooses to use the DE-DoHA Approved Course Progress Policy and later chooses not to after indicating that it would use the policy.

A new course progress policy must not be commenced until the beginning of a study period and only after students have been informed of the intended change.

4.8 Explanatory Notes

4.8.1 Compassionate or compelling circumstances

Compassionate or compelling circumstances are circumstances that are beyond the control of the student and that have an impact on the student's capacity and/or ability to progress through a course. Such circumstances could include:

- Serious illness or injury, with a medical certificate stating that the student was unable to attend classes;
- Bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible a death certificate should be provided);
- Major political upheavals or natural disasters in the student's home country requiring the student's emergency travel, which then impacts adversely on their studies;

A traumatic experience, which could include but is not limited to:

- Involvement in or witnessing of an accident;
- A crime committed against the student;
- The student being witness to a crime, which impacts adversely on the student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports).

Please note that the above are only some of examples of what may be considered compassionate or compelling circumstances. **Providers are asked to use their professional judgment and to assess each case on its individual merits.** When determining whether compassionate or compelling circumstances exist, providers should consider documentary evidence provided to support the claim. Providers should keep copies of these documents, together with a record of why the decision was made, in the student's file.

4.8.2 Erratic course progress as a potential indication of non-bona fide students

If the provider suspects that a student is not a bona fide student, the provider may cancel the student's enrolment, as allowed under Standard 13. However, providers must ensure that prior to enrolment students were made aware of the grounds on which cancellation of enrolment may occur, as required under Standard 2.1f, for example, a provider takes erratic course progress into account in identifying non-bona fide students, erratic progress must be clearly defined and stated prior to enrolment as one of the grounds for cancellation of enrolment. Similarly, if a provider identifies bona fide students on the basis of participation, failure to participate must be clearly stated prior to enrolment as grounds for cancellation of enrolment.

4.8.3 Monitoring course progress for reporting purposes and for completion within the duration

Standard 9.1 requires the registered provider to have and implement documented policies and procedures for monitoring the course progress of each student to ensure that at all times the student is in a position to complete the course within the expected duration as specified on the student's CoE. While monitoring progress against the course duration is a separate requirement to monitoring course progress for reporting purposes, there may be some overlap in procedures. For example, a provider's course progress procedure may require that at the end of each study period each student's results are checked to determine course progress for that study period. In order to avoid duplication of effort, at the same time the provider may also check each student's progress towards completion of the course within the specified duration.

5 Academic Progression and Intervention

5.1 Intervention and student support

As part of the student support practices and procedures at UBSS, students with poor performance in their first assessment in each trimester will receive an *Early Warning letter*.

The purpose of the Early Warning Letter is to raise the student's awareness of the need to improve their performance and to highlight sources of assistance offered at UBSS.

The student will also be advised of the further potential of receiving a formal Academic Warning at the end of the trimester for failure to achieve academic progress (refer section 5.2).

The *Early Warning letter* **will be issued to students** based on one or more of the following:

- Failure to submit their first assessment item without an approved extension of time or failure to attend the first assessment;
- A report from the Program Director that the student has plagiarised extensively in their first assessment item;
- Poor academic performance (a mark of less than 50 percent) in their first assessment item.

Students may be required to meet with the program director to develop an Academic Study Plan and agreement.

5.2 Failure to achieve Academic Progress

Students who fail to make Academic Progress will be subject to the following provisions of this policy. There are two formal warnings issued to students who fail to make satisfactory academic progress.

5.3 Academic Warning 1

Students who do not make satisfactory academic progress in a trimester for the first time since enrolling at UBSS are sent, at the end of the trimester, an *Academic Warning 1* letter advising them of their failure to make satisfactory academic progress and of the appeal process and the intervention strategies available to them.

5.4 Academic Warning 2.

Students who do not make satisfactory academic progress in a second consecutive trimester, and who have no upheld appeal from *Academic Warning 1*, are sent an *Academic Warning 2* letter advising them of their failure to make satisfactory academic progress for the second time, and reminding them of the appeal process and available intervention strategies. International students who receive a second warning and do not make a successful appeal are reported to DIBP, given satisfactory academic progress is a visa requirement.

5.5 Discontinuation of Studies

Students who have received two academic warnings, and who have not been successful in upheld appeals from these Warnings have their enrolment at UBSS discontinued on a recommendation of the **Dean** that is endorsed by the Academic Senate. Such students receive notification in writing with the reasons for their discontinuation explained, and have a right to appeal (externally) via the UBSS published academic grievance procedure. Affected international students are reported to DIBP for visa cancellation.

5.6 Maximum Course Duration

The standard completion time for a degree course is three years of full-time study for an undergraduate degree and two years of full-time study for an MBA. The actual completion may be reduced if the student receives credit transfers (maximum of one-year reduction for undergraduate degrees and one-trimester reduction for MBA). International students must adhere to their CoE period and associated visa approval period.

International students are required to maintain a full-time study load (eight subjects in a calendar year across three trimesters is standard) to ensure they can make satisfactory academic progress and complete their course within their CoE period.

5.7 Multiple Failures in same subject

Students who fail the same subject twice are required to seek approval and counsel from the Dean (or delegate) prior to enrolling in the subject for a third time. Students who fail the same subject three times are refused further enrolment in the subject, and may be excluded from the course. In such instances, the student's case is brought to the Academic Senate, which reviews the circumstances as well as the student's overall academic performance, and advises the Dean whether the student should or should not be excluded.

Foundation program students only

The Academic Senate may recommend that the failed subject be replaced with a similar subject or assessment task at the same level. External accreditation requirements are also considered in such cases. Final approval rests with the Dean, who is also responsible for providing a documented outcome, including the rationale for the decision, to the student.

5.8 Application of Academic Progression & Intervention Policy

5.6.1 Academic Warning

Each trimester, after examination results are published, students who fail to maintain satisfactory academic progress are issued with Academic Warning 1 or 2 depending on their circumstances.

Academic Warnings are very important, and students are expected to take them seriously.

Students who receive an Academic Warning have the options of:

Contacting Student Services within 20 working days of the Academic Warning letter being issued and requesting access to the UBSS intervention strategies (academic and non-academic) outlined in Section 6.0 of this Manual. The **Dean** or delegate can also meet with the student at the latter's request to discuss the type of intervention (academic or non-academic) that is most appropriate and to prepare and document an action plan. This approach is highly recommended;

Appealing the Warning within 20 working days of its issue. Appeals, supported by relevant evidence, must be lodged via MyGCA (as explained in the Warning letter).

5.6.2 Assessment & Appeals

Appeals submitted within the 20-day period are assessed by the **Dean** or delegate. Assessment may include consultation with relevant staff. Decisions on whether to uphold or dismiss appeals are based on the statement provided by the student and other factors that include, but are not limited to:

Relevance and timeliness of evidence provided by the student, such as a medical certificate, counsellor's report or police report. Detailed information is provided at:
<https://www.mcnsw.org.au/medical-certificates-what-you-should-know>

Evidence of previous attempts by the student to try to rectify poor performance; Administrative error or oversight by UBSS/GCA;

Multiple failures in the same subject (an alternate subject may be recommended).

The student is advised of the outcome of their appeal via the MyGCA system. Students who are dissatisfied with the outcome and explanation have the option of lodging an academic grievance as per the UBSS Academic Grievance Policy.

5.6.3 Show Cause

A student who has received two Academic Warnings and who has not responded to those warnings either by seeking intervention or by submitting an appeal is sent a letter through their MyGCA account asking them to **show cause** to the Academic Senate as to why they should not be excluded from their course due to poor academic performance. The student may appeal the show-cause letter.

Students who do not respond to a show-cause letter by the due date or who appeal but have their appeal dismissed are excluded from their course by the **Academic Senate**.

Appeal applications or reasons provided informally by a student (by the show-cause due date only) must be evidence-based and are considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the student's history at UBSS.

5.9 Access to Intervention Strategies

UBSS provides academic and non-academic intervention strategies to assist students who are placed on Academic Warning, as well as for students who request access to these strategies for any other reason.

5.7.1 Academic Intervention Strategies

UBSS academic Staff identify academic matters (ie poor study skills, less 50% in the first assessment) as a reason for the student failing to maintain satisfactory academic progress, the student will be instructed to contact their lecturer.

The following strategies are implemented -

- Where the problem is identified as academic (e.g., absent/did not attempt first assessment; and/or <50% in the first assessment) a consultation takes place between the Student and the Lecturer.
- An *Early Intervention Letter* is sent to the Student informing them of the academic support available at UBSS and that they are at risk of failing the subject.
- Actions/Records of all decisions are uploaded onto the Student's MyGCA Journal.

Where a Student has been identified as receiving an academic warning in either of the previous two (2) consecutive study periods (trimesters), they will have their enrolment at UBSS discontinued by the **Dean** under delegated authority by the Academic Senate. Students are notified of the intention – and given 20 working days to appeal/show cause.

Where a Student is at risk of having their enrolment cancelled, they are granted a twenty (20) working day period to appeal.

- If an appeal is accepted, the Student signs an Academic Agreement (AA) contract and is on notice. Where the Student has not abided by the conditions of the (AA) contract his/her CoE may be cancelled.
- If the appeal is declined and/or no appeal has been received within the 20 working day period this will result in the cancellation of Student's CoE. The student will be notified in writing of the reasons for the refusal and their rights to appeal the decision. Students wishing to make an appeal should refer to the UBSS Grievance and Appeal Policy.

Students can take one (1) day up to four (4) weeks leave of absence on compassionate grounds. A Student is granted a four week leave upon the understanding this may affect their final grade.

5.7.2 Non-Academic Intervention Strategies

Where the student and/or a member of UBSS staff identifies a non-academic matter(s) as the main cause of the student’s failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress, the student is requested to contact Student Services, who will organise appropriate assistance in line with the GCA International Student Support Services Policy or GCA Student Welfare Policy.

Student Services make any initial arrangements considered necessary on the student’s behalf, with the consent of the student.

The student also has the option of discussing their situation with the **Dean** or delegate, who can then prepare and document a suitable intervention plan.

6. Document Change Control

Version	Change Description	Date	Author
v1	New Policy – combining and replacing the <i>Academic Progression & Intervention Policy</i> and the <i>Course Progress Policy (Monitoring)</i>	01.09.18	Prof Ian Bofinger
V2	Refresh and change to next review date	August 2019	Professor Ian Bofinger
V2.1	Detail around support services available to students requiring intervention Mention of Central College and Metro English College has been deleted Government Department name changes reflected Section 5.7.1 has been refined	January 2020	Emeritus Professor Greg Whateley
V2.2	Changes Executive Dean to Dean. Remove attendance as a reason for early intervention and change to first assessment for Early Intervention Letter in Section 5.2. Changes to Section 5.7.1 in line with automation of Early Warning Letter procedure.	March 2021	Professor Andrew West