Student Academic Progress Procedure

The amendments to this procedure in clauses 12(c), 13(c), 14 and 19, approved by Academic Senate on 10 April 2024, will be implemented from Semester 1 2024 onwards.

Foreword

(1) This procedure supports the Program Design and Management Manual, the Governance Rule, the Awards and Graduation Policy and their associated Schedules. In the event of an inconsistency between lower-level policy documents and a Rule(s) or Schedule to the Rule(s), the Rule(s) made by Council prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.

(2) In the event of an inconsistency between a policy document approved by Academic Senate and a College policy, procedure or guideline, the policy document approved by Academic Senate prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.

(3) For Quality Assurance of Programs and Courses refer to the Education Quality Assurance Policy.

Purpose

(4) This Procedure is designed to:

a. provide direction for the staff of the University of Newcastle (University) when managing student academic progress matters, at course and program level.
b. provide students with guidance on the processes the University will undertake to manage student academic progress matters.

Scope

(5) This procedure applies to students completing coursework programs created and offered by the University including:

a. enabling programs;
b. undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs; and
c. coursework programs offered by the University to students studying in Australia and offshore, including those students who enrol through a partner institution.

(6) This procedure generally applies to the Joint Medical Program (JMP). In the event of an inconsistency between the procedure and the policies and procedures specific to the JMP, then the policies and procedures of the JMP prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

(7) This Procedure does not apply to students enrolled in the following programs:

a. ELICOS (see ELICOS Program Manual); and
b. Higher Degrees by Research (see Higher Degree by Research Policy).

Authorising Policy

(8) This procedure has been developed in accordance with the Awards and Graduation Policy and its relevant schedules.

Definitions

(9) In the context of this manual the following definitions apply:

a. 'Exclusion' as defined by the Student Conduct Rule
b. 'Probation' means a status that permits a student's enrolment in their program subject to an enrolment plan being placed on the student by the Program Convenor;
c. 'Progressing' means students are making satisfactory academic progress;
d. 'Progression at Risk' is a warning that a student is not progressing satisfactorily, and the University will offer support services to assist students with their performance;
e. 'Progression Under Review' means a student may have restrictions placed against their enrolment by the College Progress and Appeals Committee. Restrictions include:
    i. a reduced study load;
    ii. suspension or exclusion from a program or College for a specified period; or
    iii. direction into an alternative study pathway or program.
f. College Progress and Appeals Committee includes the Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre Progress and Appeals Committee, unless otherwise specified.

Section 1 - Student Progress Principles

(10) The following guiding principles, established by Academic Senate, will be utilised to manage student progress:

a. The University is committed to helping students progress through their studies, complete their program, and graduate. Students are expected to take responsibility for their learning and take steps to improve their progress. This includes making use of support services and learning support.
b. The University will monitor student's academic program progress to appropriately support students who are at risk of not maintaining acceptable progress.
c. The University will monitor student's academic course success to appropriately support students who are at risk of not maintaining acceptable progress.
d. Each student will be assigned one of the following academic progress statuses at any given time:
    i. Progressing;
    ii. Progression at Risk;
    iii. Probation; or
    iv. Progression Under Review.

Section 2 - Student Progress Procedure

Student Academic Progress Status

(11) The University will monitor each students academic progress from their first term of study.

(12) Students who:

a. pass 50% or more of their units in any term of study will be assigned an academic status of 'Progressing';

b. do not pass at least 50% of their units in any term will be assigned an academic progress status of ‘Progression at Risk’.
c. fail or withdraw from a course for a second time will be assigned an academic status of ‘Progression at Risk’.

(13) If a student assigned an academic progress status of ‘Progression at Risk’:

a. passes 50% or more of their units in their next term of study, they will be assigned an academic status of ‘Progressing’;
b. does not pass 50% or more of their units attempted in their next term of study, they will be assigned an academic status of ‘Progression Under Review’.
c. fails or withdraws from a course for a third or subsequent time, will be assigned an academic progress status of ‘Progression Under Review’.

(14) In the case of internal programs transfers, a student's academic progress status will transfer to the new program.

(15) Students who fail or withdraw from a course identified as a compulsory program requirement, as described in the Program Handbook, will be assigned an academic progress status of ‘Probation’ for one year.

(16) A student with an academic progress status of ‘Probation’ may have their enrolment restricted by the College Progress and Appeals Committee, on the recommendation of the relevant Program Convenor.

(17) A student with an academic progress status of ‘Progression Under Review’ may have their enrolment restricted by the College Progress and Appeals Committee (CPAC).

(18) If a student with an academic progress status of ‘Probation’ fails or withdraws from a compulsory program requirement for a second time, they will be assigned an academic progress status of ‘Progression under Review’ and may have their enrolment restricted by the College Progress and Appeals Committee, on the recommendation of the relevant Program Convenor.

(19) If a student with an academic progress status of ‘Probation’ fails or withdraws from a course that is a non-compulsory program requirement for a third or subsequent time they will be assigned an academic progress status of ‘Progression Under Review’.

(20) Students who are suspended or excluded as a result of their academic progress, and following a review, may be permitted to continue their program with an academic status of ‘Probation’.

(21) Where a student is identified as ‘Progression Under Review’ based on course attempts, the case will be considered by the College Progress and Appeals Committee from the College with ownership of the program in which the student is enrolled, not the College with ownership of the course.

(22) Tables 1 and 2 outline the categories under which a student's academic progress status will be applied.

(23) Where a student's academic progress status is identified as both ‘Progression at Risk’ and Progression Under Review’ the student case will be dealt with under the provisions relating to ‘Progression Under Review’.

Table 1

Program Progression Indicator	Academic Progress Status
Pass 50% or more of units in any term	Progressing
Withdraw or fail more than 50% of units in any term	Progression at Risk
Withdraw or fail more than 50% of units in consecutive terms (a period or periods of leave of absence will not be considered a term for the purposes of this clause)	Progression Under Review

Table 2

Course Attempted	Academic Progress Status
Fail or withdraw from a course for the first time	Progressing
Fail or withdraw from a course for the second time (in a consecutive or non-consecutive term)	Progression at Risk
Fail or withdraw from a course for the third or subsequent time (in a consecutive or non-consecutive term)	Progression Under Review
Withdraw or fail a compulsory program requirement	Probation
Withdraw or fail a compulsory program requirement for a second or subsequent time (in a consecutive or non-consecutive term)	Progression Under Review

Grades Used to Determine Academic Progress Status

(24) High Distinction, Distinction, Credit, Pass, and Ungraded Pass are counted as passing grades.

(25) Fail grades (FF), Component Fails (CF) and Withdrawals (W) are counted as courses not passed.

(26) Withdrawn Special Circumstances (WS) grades do not count towards a student's progression rate and are applied only when a student meets the special circumstances provisions set by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment.

Notification of Academic Progress Status to Students

(27) Student Central will:

a. identify the students who have been assigned an academic progress status of ‘Progression at Risk’ or ‘Progression Under Review’ and send the relevant communications to each student and the Colleges; and
b. monitor students who, at the date of the official release of results, have a combination of I and/or S grades that upon conversion may result in an academic progress status of ‘Progression at Risk’ or ‘Progression Under Review’; and/or
c. monitor students who, at the date of the official release of results, have an I or S grade against a compulsory program requirement; and
d. send the relevant communications to students whose I, IP or S grade(s) converts to a fail, please see Grading Scales and Administrative Codes for more information.

(28) Student Central will:

a. coordinate the review of students whose academic progress status is ‘Progression Under Review’ with the relevant College Progress and Appeals Committee;
b. record all decisions and act as required under the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 and National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018; and
c. report annually to Academic Senate through the Teaching and Learning Committee, the decisions of the College Progress and Appeals Committees.

Communications to Students

(29) Student Central will contact each student whose academic progress status is ‘Progression at Risk’ to provide the following information:

a. an indication of why the student was identified as not maintaining a satisfactory standard of academic progress;

b. the outcomes of not maintaining an acceptable standard of academic progress; and
c. advice about access to assistance and support.

(30) Student Central will contact each student whose Academic Progress Status is 'Progression Under Review' to provide the following information:

a. an indication of why the student was identified as not maintaining a satisfactory standard of academic progress;
b. the expectation that they submit a statement to CPAC outlining:
    i. an explanation for their previous academic performance and supporting documentary evidence;
    ii. relevant factors impacting their performance, with supporting documentation if relevant;
    iii. information about any remedial actions that they have undertaken since first being advised of their academic progress status of 'Progression at Risk';
    iv. their prioritised selection of up to three courses for the subsequent term, noting that these courses must be consistent with the program in which they are enrolled; and
    v. strategies that they plan to follow to improve their academic performance, if permitted to continue;
c. the due date for this statement;
d. advice that failure to submit a statement may lead to exclusion or suspension from the program; and
e. contact information for assistance and advice, including contact details for the Student Advocates.

Section 3 - College Progress and Appeals Committees

College Progress and Appeals Committees Responsibilities

(31) Each College and the Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre (PALSC) shall establish a College Progress and Appeals Committee (CPAC) with the following membership:

College Progress and Appeals Committee

a. the Deputy Head of College, or nominee, who shall Chair the Committee;
b. the Associate Dean (Education) of the College;
c. Strategic Program Manager;
d. one other member from a pool of five College academic staff determined by the Pro Vice-Chancellor; and
e. co-opted members from within or outside the College for particular cases as determined by the Chair.

PALSC Progress and Appeals Committee:

a. the Deputy Dean (Education) of PALSC, who shall Chair the Committee;
b. the Head of Domestic Programs of PALSC;
c. a representative from PALSC Teaching and Learning team;
d. the Senior Administrator of PALSC; and
e. a representative from the Convenors from within PALSC.

(32) The CPAC is authorised to:

a. consider any students enrolled in programs within the College with an academic progress status of 'Progression Under Review';

b. make a determination in accordance with this procedure based on each student's previous academic record and any information provided to the Committee; and
c. consider student appeals against a final result (see Course Assessment and Grading Manual).

(33) The CPAC will have responsibility for student progress or appeals matters referred to it:

a. under this Procedure;
b. under the Course Assessment and Grading Manual (Section 20); and
c. by the Associate Director, Student and Academic Administration following a notification by an Officer of the University. In such cases, the Committee shall decide the appropriate course of action.

(34) The CPAC may resolve to allow the student to continue without restrictions.

(35) In the event that the CPAC resolves to impose a restriction, subject to the internal appeals provisions, the following restrictions may be applied:

a. allow the student to continue with one or more of the following conditions:
    i. enrolment limited to specific courses or a number of units (regardless of program of enrolment), or the student will be required to participate in an academic support program;
    ii. where the student is in a teach-out program and would not be disadvantaged, the student will be required to transition to a current offering of the program;
    iii. where the student is in a teach-out program and would not be disadvantaged, the student will be required to transition to a current offering of the program subject to the application of specified conditions e.g. enrolment limited to specific courses or number of units;
    iv. where the student is concurrently enrolled in two programs, the student must withdraw from one program;
    v. where the student is concurrently enrolled in two programs, the student must withdraw from one program and specified conditions shall be applied e.g. enrolment limited to specific courses or number of units;
    vi. where the student is enrolled in a combined degree program, the student must internally transfer into one of the two single degrees;
    vii. where the student is enrolled in a combined degree program, the student must internally transfer into one of the two single degrees and specified conditions shall be applied e.g. enrolment limited to specific courses or number of units;
    viii. support the student's stated intention to take a leave of absence;
    ix. support the student's stated intention to internally transfer to another program, noting that the academic progress status of ‘Progression under review’ will transfer to the new program, and that their academic progress will be monitored. The committee may specified additional conditions e.g. enrolment limited to specific courses or number of units; or
    x. recommend that a student considers attending academic and wellbeing support services, or undertake alternative study options in a different program or institution that may be more appropriate to the student's interests and skills.
b. suspend the student from the program or College, usually for a period of up to one academic year; or
c. exclude the student from the program or College for a period of time, usually up to one academic year.

(36) When determining whether to impose restrictions on a student's enrolment, the CPAC will consider:

a. any statement provided by the student, including any mitigating circumstances that the student has claimed are relevant;

b. the student's previous academic performance;
c. any restrictions previously imposed a students enrolment by the CPAC; and
d. whether the student has been provided with advice on relevant University support services.

(37) Student Central will provide the secretarial support for the CPAC. The Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre will support the PALSC CPAC.

Communication of Committee Determinations – All Students

(38) The Secretary to the relevant CPAC will ensure that each student is provided with an official notification of the outcome of their review and information on their right to appeal including the details of the external complaints body. This will be sent via email, usually within seven working days of the committee's decision.

(39) Communications will be compliant with all relevant legislative obligations, including the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018. Where an international student studying on a student visa is identified for suspension or exclusion, in addition to being advised of their right of appeal they will be advised to seek advice from the Department of Home Affairs for the potential impact on their student visa.

Finalising Committee Determinations

(40) Determinations made by the College Progress and Appeals Committee will not be finalised until the relevant appeal period has expired.

(41) As part of the finalisation of the suspension or exclusion, the University will ensure that any current or future enrolment is removed from the student record.

(42) For international students, the cancellation of the enrolment and the reason will be recorded in the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS). The Department of Home Affairs will then have access to information related to the cancellation of the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).

Appeals Against College Progress and Appeals Committee Determinations

(43) A student may appeal a decision made under clause 35.

(44) An appeal against a decision of the Committee must be lodged within five working days of notice of the outcome, with the exception of an appeal against a decision to suspend or exclude a student from their studies, where the appeal period will be 20 days.

(45) An appeal may only be on one or more of the following grounds:

a. evidence of a breach of this Procedure; and/or
b. evidence that the determination was affected by a conflict of interest; and/or
c. new information has become available that could not reasonably have been provided by the student earlier, and it is probable that this information would have affected the determination.

(46) An appeal on the grounds of the restriction alone will not be considered.

(47) An appeal must be made in writing and the grounds of appeal must be clearly set out.

(48) The appeal is to be made to the Appeal Officer, who in the context of this procedure is the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

(49) Upon receipt of an appeal made in time in accordance with Clause 41 the Appeal Officer:

a. will consider the information provided in the appeal, to the extent that the information relates to one of the grounds of appeal set out in Clause 41;
b. will consider material taken into account by the original decision maker in making their determination, which is relevant to the grounds of appeal;
c. may request further information from the student or from the original decision maker, and will then either:
    i. dismiss the appeal;
    ii. uphold the appeal and reverse the original decision; or
    iii. uphold the appeal and vary the original decision.

Determination is Final

(50) The Appeal Officer will inform the student in writing of the determination, including reasons for the determination.

(51) The determination of the Appeal Officer is final and there is no further avenue of appeal within the University.

(52) The student may have the right to further appeal outside the University.

Section 4 - Relaxing Provision

(53) To provide for exceptional circumstances arising in any particular case, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), on the recommendation of a Pro Vice-Chancellor, may relax any provisions of this Procedure.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	15th May 2024
Review Date	15th May 2027
Approval Authority	President Academic Senate
Approval Date	8th May 2024
Expiry Date	16th July 2025
Responsible Executive	Belinda Yourn Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic & Global)
Enquiries Contact	John Radvan Senior Manager, Academic Governance & Compliance

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Enabling program" - A tertiary preparation program offered to domestic students.

"Graduate" - (Noun) Has the same meaning as in section 3(2) of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Risk" - Effect of uncertainty on objectives. Note: An effect is a deviation from the expected, whether it is positive and/or negative.

"Working day" - Any day other than Saturday, Sunday, or a public holiday in Newcastle, on which business may be conducted.

"Academic staff" - A person employed as an academic staff member or appointed as an academic honorary appointee (including adjunct, clinical conjoint, visiting, honorary and conjoint appointments), but does not include persons who are employed solely as teachers or professional staff.

"Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)" - Means the document issued through the Australian Government's relevant department and associated systems, by authorised officers of the University that confirms that an international student is eligible to enrol in a course. The CoE is required under Commonwealth Legislation for the student visa.

"Course" - When referring to a course offered by the University, a course is a set of learning activities or learning opportunities with defined, assessed and recorded learning outcomes. A course will be identified by an alphanumeric course code and course title. Course types include core courses, compulsory courses, directed courses, capstone courses and electives. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Student" - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

"Officer" - Has the meaning given in the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth), or any replacing legislation.

"Postgraduate" - Any qualification being at the level of Graduate Certificate or above.

"Program" - When referring to learning, a program is a sequence of approved learning, usually leading to an Award. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Program Convenor" - The academic staff member with overall responsibility for the management and quality of a

program.

"Staff" - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.

"Suspension" - The temporary termination of a student's rights and privileges for a specified period of time, which may include: (a) suspension from attendance at lectures, seminars, tutorials, practical classes, supervisor meetings or similar periods of instruction (b) withdrawal of the right to use, enter or to be within the Premises and/or (c) suspension from representing the University.

"Term" - When referring to an academic period, term means a period of time aligned to an academic year for the delivery of a course in which students enrol and for which they are usually charged fees for example semesters, trimesters, summer, winter or full-year term. The academic year for a term is determined by the academic year in which the course commences, not concludes. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Undergraduate" - Refers to any qualification up to and including the level of a Bachelor Honours degree.

"Unit" - When referring to an academic unit, unit means the proportional amount of academic credit allotted to a course. This term is used to define the requirements for a program award of the University and indicate a student's enrolment load. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"International student" - A student (as defined by the University) who is not an Australian citizen, Australian Permanent Resident or New Zealand citizen (or dual citizenship holders of either Australia or New Zealand). This includes students who will be studying offshore and those who will be studying onshore and have a student visa, provisional residency, temporary residency, bridging visa, or any other category of non-permanent visa for Australia.

"College" - An organisational unit established within the University by the Council.