

# STUDENT PROGRESSION AND EXCLUSION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

## 1. Overview

Astra Institute of Higher Education ("the Institute") has designed this policy to detail the rules for meeting course progression requirements and to define the grounds for exclusion of a student due to lack of satisfactory academic progress.

The Institute requires that the academic achievement of each student is monitored so that students who are determined to be 'at risk' can be provided with advice and support to ensure successful course completion whenever possible.

## 2. Student study load

Over the course of an academic year a normal full-time study load will be enrolment:

- i. in 1.00 EFTSL in a whole year (three consecutive trimesters); or
- ii. in 80 Credit Points in a whole year; or
- iii. for 288 hours in a whole year.

For students to maintain a full-time study load they must be enrolled in and undertaking, or intending to enroll in at least 75% of the normal amount of full-time study. This equates to enrolment at least:

- i. in 0.75 EFTSL in a whole year (three consecutive trimesters); or
- ii. in 60 Credit Points in a whole year; or
- iii. for 216 hours in a whole year.

## 3. Maximum time to complete a course

The expected duration of any course is the expected minimum time required to complete the course based on a full-time equivalent study load. For courses with international student enrolments, the expected course duration will be as registered on the Australian Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS). The expected duration for full-time domestic students and international students should be equal.

Students must meet the completion requirements of a course within a prescribed number of years from the date of first enrolment. The rationale for placing a timeframe on course completion is to ensure that the qualification awarded reflects currency of knowledge and skill.

The number of years allowed to complete the requirements of a course are listed in the table below. The time elapsed will be calculated from the date that the student commenced their

first study period. The Institute will send students a courtesy reminder after two study periods of inactivity to notify students of the maximum time to complete.

The normal maximum course duration for all award courses is  $2n + 2$  years, where  $n$  is the full-time equivalent duration of the course in years.

Full-time equivalent course duration	Maximum course duration
1 year	3 years
2 years	6 years
3 years	8 years
4 years	10 years

### 3.2 Applications for an extension of time

Students who are not expected to complete their course within the prescribed maximum course duration and who can reasonably be expected to meet the course requirements within two additional study periods may apply for an extension of time. Each application will be considered on its merits and with reference to the student's academic performance to date.

Applications for an extension of time to complete the course must be made in writing to the Course Coordinator at least one study period prior to the expiry of the student's prescribed time to complete the course. The application must include reasons for the student's inability to complete the qualification in the prescribed time period. The Course Coordinator will provide a written response to the student within 20 working days outlining their decision and informing the student of their right to request a review of the decision.

### 3.3 Students who fail to complete within the time limit

Students who fail to complete course requirements within the specified time limit (including any extension of time granted) will have their enrolment terminated and a statement noting that "the maximum time to complete the course has been exceeded" will appear on the final record of results issued to the student. The student will be advised in writing of the decision to terminate their enrolment and will also be advised that they have 20 working days from receiving notification of the decision to terminate their enrolment to request a review of the decision.

## 4. Requirement to attain minimum academic standards

Students are required to attain the following minimum academic standards in order to be deemed to be maintaining satisfactory academic progress in a course:

- i. Not more than one failure in the same unit in consecutive teaching periods; and/or
- ii. Not fail 50% or more of the units attempted in a study period.

The Course Coordinator monitors the academic performance of each student against the minimum academic standards at the end of each study period. Where a student has failed to meet the minimum academic standards the Course Coordinator will deem that student as being 'at risk'.

#### **4.1 Students deemed 'at risk'**

The Course Coordinator will contact each student who is deemed to be 'at risk' and arrange an appointment with the Student Support Officer for an academic counselling session. The student will also be advised of the possibility that conditions may be placed on their enrolment.

During the academic counselling session, the Student Support Officer and student will determine what additional support will be provided to the student and an intervention strategy will be put in place. This may include, but is not limited to, the student:

- i. entering into a learning contract;
- ii. attending academic skills seminars;
- iii. attending tutorial or study groups;
- iv. receiving individual case management;
- v. attending additional counselling sessions;
- vi. receiving assistance with personal issues which are influencing progress;
- vii. receiving mentoring; or
- viii. a combination of the above.

When counselling students at risk, specific consideration will be given to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to support them to progress and complete their course.

##### **4.1.1 Monitoring students 'at risk'**

A record of the academic counselling session conducted by the Student Support Officer with the student at risk will be signed by the Student Support Officer and the student, and placed on the student's file and the Course Coordinator notified in writing of the outcome.

The Course Coordinator will monitor the academic progress of students at risk throughout the trimester whilst the student remains at risk, and may refer the student to the Student Support Officer for additional counselling and supports if the student's academic performance does not demonstratively improve.

Academic performance of students at risk will be assessed at the end of the trimester and if the minimum academic standards have been re-attained, students will no longer be considered 'at risk'.

## **4.2 Students who continue to fail to meet minimum academic standards**

If a student continues to fail to meet minimum academic standards after an intervention strategy has been put in place, the Course Coordinator will request that the student provide a written statement within 20 working days outlining reasons why they should be permitted to continue their enrolment in the course.

A student who does not submit a written statement by the due date shall have their enrolment terminated.

The Course Coordinator shall consider the written statement and may:

- i. terminate the student's enrolment; or
- ii. permit the student to continue with or without specific conditions.

The Course Coordinator will provide a written statement to the student within 20 working days outlining their decision and informing the student of their right to request a review of the decision.

A student who is permitted to continue their enrolment in the course, but with conditions imposed, who again fails to attain the minimum academic standards or breaches the conditions imposed, will have their enrolment terminated due to unsatisfactory academic progress.

## **4.3 Consequences of termination of enrolment**

Students whose enrolment is terminated due to unsatisfactory academic progress or exceeding the maximum time to complete their course and who wish to undertake further study will need to apply to the Institute for re-admission in line with the *Student Selection and Admissions Policy and Procedure*.

## **5. Academic Literacy and English Language Proficiency**

Academic literacy and English language proficiency are important factors in a student being able to satisfactorily progress through their course.

'Academic literacy' refers to the capacity of a student to undertake formal study and to understand and communicate discipline-specific knowledge. 'English language proficiency' refers to the student's ability to understand and communicate knowledge effectively in both written and spoken English.

Higher Education Providers are responsible for ensuring their students are sufficiently competent in the English language to participate effectively in their studies. To assist in the identification of students requiring further development of their academic literacy and English language proficiency skills, each unit during the first study period in all of the Institute's accredited courses will contain an early formative assessment task in the first third of the study period. If the outcomes for this assessment task is deemed unsatisfactory due to poor

academic literacy and English language proficiency skills then the student will be referred to the Course Coordinator for a more comprehensive assessment.

Following the assessment, the Course Coordinator will put in place an intervention strategy to assist the student to enhance their academic literacy and English language proficiency skills. This may include:

- i. undertaking academic skills seminars; and/or
- ii. attending tutorial or study groups; and/or
- iii. referral to external English proficiency support services; and/or
- iv. receiving one-on-one support and coaching services.

Information about support services to assist students to enhance their academic literacy and English language proficiency skills is provided at Orientation prior to the start of a student's first study period, via the website and in first year unit outlines. Students may self-refer to student support for assistance with academic literacy and English language proficiency at any time.

## **6. Failing a prerequisite unit**

Normal course progression rules require that a student who has not passed a prerequisite for entry to a particular unit cannot be enrolled in that unit. However, where a student believes that this rule may adversely affect their course progress, the student may seek a review of this rule by writing to the Dean. The Dean will assess the student's academic record and, if the Dean believes the student has a fair chance of success, they may allow the student to repeat the prerequisite unit concurrently with the unit for which it is a prerequisite.

## **7. International student progression**

International students are expected to complete their course in the standard number of years for a student undertaking a full-time load (the registered CRICOS course duration) less any time for credit granted by the institution. This time period is noted on the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).

The Course Coordinator will monitor international students' enrolment load and academic progress at the end of each compulsory study period to determine if the student has met the minimum academic standards and will be able to complete their studies within the registered course duration. Where necessary an intervention strategy will be put in place.

The Course Coordinator may extend the duration of an international student's study where it is clear that the student will not complete the course within the expected duration, as specified on the student's CoE, as the result of:

- i. compassionate or compelling circumstances including and not limited to include and are not limited to:

- a. serious illness or injury;
  - b. bereavement of close family members; and/or
- ii. an intervention strategy being implemented for students who are at risk of not meeting minimum academic standards.

Where an international student has failed to meet minimum academic standards, the Dean may consider a reduction in their study load as part of the intervention strategy. All considerations for a reduction in study load due to failure to meet academic standards will be at the sole discretion of the Dean.

Following an intervention strategy being put in place, if an international student fails to meet the minimum academic standards in a second consecutive study period, the Course Coordinator will advise the student in writing of the intention to report the student for not achieving satisfactory academic progress. The student will be advised that they should seek advice from the Department of Home Affairs on the potential impact on their student visa if they are reported for failure to meet minimum academic standards. The student will also be advised that they have 20 working days to access the Institute's grievance handling process, if they wish to do so.

The student has a right to continue their studies in the course during the period for lodging a grievance/appeal and, if the student lodges a grievance/appeal, during the period the grievance/appeal is being considered.

After all grievance and appeals processes are finalised, or if the student has chosen not to access the appeals process within 20 working days, the student's enrolment will be formally cancelled and the Institute will report the student through PRISMS.

## **8. Review of decision**

A student may request a Review of Decision of a decision made under this policy. The grounds for a review are that the decision is inconsistent with this policy. Requests for a review must be made in writing and lodged with the Dean within 10 working days of the student receiving written notification of the decision. The Dean will respond in writing to the request within 20 working days and may confirm or vary the decision. All decisions of the Dean in regards to requests for the review of a decision made under this policy will be reported to the Teaching and Learning Committee.

If a student remains dissatisfied with the outcome of their request for Review of Decision regarding a decision made under this policy, they may lodge a formal grievance in writing to the Registrar: [registrar@astra.edu.au](mailto:registrar@astra.edu.au) within 20 working days, in accordance with the Institute's *Student Grievance Handling Policy and Procedure*.

## 9. Definitions

Term	Definition
<i>Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)</i>	A document issued by the Institute to intending international students that confirms the student’s eligibility to enrol in a course at the Institute.
<i>Course</i>	A structured sequence of study leading to the award of a degree, or other recognised qualification, which when successfully completed is conferred on the graduand by the Board of Directors of Astra Institute of Higher Education.
<i>Domestic student</i>	A student who is an Australian citizen (including Australian citizens with dual citizenship), or a student who is a New Zealand citizen or a student who has Permanent Resident Status.
<i>(the) Institute</i>	Astra Institute of Higher Education.
<i>International student</i>	A holder of a student visa, who is not a citizen of Australia or New Zealand, or who is not an Australian permanent resident, or who is a temporary resident of Australia.
<i>Teaching period</i>	A specified period of time during which formal teaching is scheduled.

## 10. Related documents

- Student Grievance Handling Policy and Procedure
- Student Selection and Admissions Policy and Procedure

## 11. Version history

Version	Approved by	Approval Date	Details
1.0	Academic Board	14 December 2021	Document creation
1.1	Academic Board	29 June 2023	Amendments to '4.1.1 Monitoring students 'at risk'', and '8. Review of decision'.

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