

POLICY ON THE REVIEW OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Authorised By:	Academic Board, and Vice-Chancellor and President, on behalf of Council.
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Implementation & Review:	Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Academic)
Related Documents:	<p>Review of Academic Progress policy for each faculty, all available at http://www.adelaide.edu.au/policies/1803/</p> <p><i>Research Student Handbook</i>, available at http://www.adelaide.edu.au/policies/1523/</p> <p><i>Code of Practice for Postgraduate Coursework Studies</i>, available at https://www.adelaide.edu.au/policies/1283/</p> <p>Academic Program Rules for Professional Doctorates, available at http://www.adelaide.edu.au/calendar/pg/</p> <p><i>Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act, 2000 (Cth)</i>, available at http://comlaw.gov.au/</p> <p><i>National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (The National Code)</i>, available at http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/international_education/</p> <p><i>Migration Act 1958 (Cth)</i>, available at http://comlaw.gov.au/</p>
Superseded Documents:	<i>Preclusion of Students for Unsatisfactory Academic Progress - Information Notice For Students And Faculties</i> (Nov 2001).
Contact Person:	Any person who requires assistance with any aspect of this policy should contact Peter Backhouse or Julie Hayford in Student Policy and Appeals on +61 8 8303 7503 or +61 8 8303 7572.

1. Overview

The University of Adelaide is committed to maintaining the highest standards in student academic performance. It ensures students have the opportunity to perform academically to the best of their ability, and have support and assistance to reconsider their study options where a program proves to be unsuited to their abilities and interests.

As part of this commitment the University monitors the progress of its students on an annual basis. This policy provides the framework for review of academic progress, and for complaint and appeal procedures for decisions made regarding academic progress.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all domestic and international students in undergraduate or postgraduate degree or diploma programs of more than 1 year's duration.

3. Definitions

Academic program (or program) refers to the primary award in which a student is enrolled for study at the University - for example, Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Diploma in Agricultural Production.

Academic progress refers to the measurement of a student's academic performance as he or she completes the requirements of the program in which he or she is enrolled.

DIMA refers to the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs. See <http://www.immi.gov.au/study/>

Domestic student means a person who is legitimately enrolled at the University in an undergraduate or postgraduate academic program and who is an Australian or New Zealand citizen, or who holds Permanent Residency status in Australia.

Executive Dean means the senior academic who is responsible for managing a faculty.

Faculty means the groupings of academic areas within the University, which are currently the Faculty of Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences, the Faculty of Health Sciences, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, the Faculty of Sciences, and the Faculty of the Professions. Faculties are made up of schools, and schools are made up of disciplines.

Higher degree by research (HDR) student means a person legitimately enrolled at the University in a Masters or doctoral degree (PhD/professional doctorate) that comprises a minimum of two thirds of its assessable content by research – for example, the Master of Engineering Science or Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Economics program.

Honours student means a person who is legitimately enrolled at the University in an undergraduate academic program at the Honours level – for example, in the Honours degree of Bachelor of Laws, or the Bachelor of Environmental Studies (Honours) program.

International student means a person legitimately enrolled at the University in an undergraduate or postgraduate academic program, as neither a citizen of Australia or New Zealand, nor a Permanent Resident in Australia.

Masters by coursework student means a person legitimately enrolled at the University in a higher degree program at the Masters level, which is based predominantly on coursework study, with a minor or zero research component – for example, the Master of Business Administration program.

Postgraduate student means a person legitimately enrolled at the University in a higher degree program designated by the statutes or rules to be a postgraduate program. This includes students enrolled in coursework or research programs such as a Graduate Diploma, Masters, or Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) program.

Professional doctorate student means a student who is undertaking a doctoral degree that comprises a minimum of two thirds of its assessable content by research and which is specifically aimed at practitioners in the field

Student means a person legitimately enrolled at the University as an undergraduate or postgraduate student.

Undergraduate student means a student legitimately enrolled at the University in an academic program designated by the statutes or rules to be an undergraduate program.

4. Policy Principles

4.1 Review of Academic Progress

All students in University programs of **more than 1 year's duration** will have their academic progress reviewed annually.

4.1.1 Undergraduate Students

Faculties will develop and maintain a Review of Academic Progress Policy that sets out the principles and procedures for the annual review of all undergraduate students.

4.1.2 Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma and Honours students

Faculties are not required to review the academic progress of students enrolled in programs of **1 year's duration or less**.

4.1.3 Masters by Coursework Students

- a. Faculties may maintain a Review of Academic Progress Policy that requires the annual review of Masters by coursework students. If they do so, they must promote to students the existence and implications of the policy.
- b. Where faculties do not have such a policy, the academic progress of postgraduate coursework students will be monitored according to the *Code of Practice for Postgraduate Coursework Studies*.

4.1.4 Higher Degree by Research Students

The academic progress of students in higher degree by research programs is managed according to the section on the Annual Review of Progress in the *Research Student Handbook*.

4.1.5 Professional Doctorate Students

The academic progress of professional doctorate students is managed according to the academic program rules that apply to each program.

4.2 Promoting Review of Academic Progress

Each Faculty and the Graduate Centre must advise students of any relevant Review of Academic Progress or Annual Review procedures, and make clear to students at the beginning of each academic year the criteria for determining unsatisfactory academic performance for that year.

4.3 Procedural Fairness

The review process outlined in each Faculty Review of Academic Progress Policy (for undergraduate and designated Masters by coursework students), the section on the Annual Review of Progress in the *Research Student Handbook* (for Higher Degree research students),

the *Code of Practice for Postgraduate Coursework Studies* (for most postgraduate coursework students) and Academic Program Rules (for Professional Doctorate students) must reflect the principles of procedural fairness by ensuring a student's right to a fair hearing, and their right to an impartial decision.

4.3.1 The Right to a Fair Hearing

- a. Students must be notified in writing if they are identified as having made unsatisfactory academic progress.
- b. The written notification must include information on:
 - i The purpose of the review or preclusion process;
 - ii The criteria used to define unsatisfactory academic progress;
 - iii The information that is taken into account in reviewing their academic progress;
 - iv Possible outcomes of review of academic progress;
 - v The consequences that flow from those outcomes;
 - vi What the student is entitled to do to make their submission to the decision-maker;
 - vii Where to consult the relevant Review of Academic Progress Policy, Code of Practice, Annual Review of Progress or Academic Program Rules.
- c. Students must have the opportunity to put their case to the decision-maker.
 - i The written notification must be sent in time for the student to adequately prepare their submission;
 - ii The right to a fair hearing in academic progress review will usually be satisfied by allowing the student to present a written submission. Students will not usually appear in person at a Review of Academic Progress Committee.
- d. Students must be provided with reasons for any decisions made as a result of their review of academic progress.

4.3.2 The Right to an Impartial Decision

- a. All decisions regarding academic review must be made by an impartial decision-maker;
- b. Decision-makers must not have formed any pre-judgement of any case before hearing the evidence relevant to the case.
- c. Any staff member with a direct or indirect financial or personal interest in a particular case must not sit on the decision-making committee for that case, even if he or she does not believe that their interest would affect their decision-making.
- d. Any staff member with a personal relationship with a student must not sit on the decision-making committee for their academic review, even if he or she does not believe that their personal relationship would affect their decision-making.
- e. The review procedure must not only be impartial, it must be seen to be impartial. A fair-minded observer must reasonably view the decision-maker as bringing an impartial and unprejudiced mind to the decision-making.
- f. The decisions of the review and preclusion process must be based solely on relevant considerations.

4.4 Confidentiality

Reviews of academic progress necessarily deal with private and personal information about students, and appropriate levels of confidentiality must be maintained.

4.5 Complaints and Appeals

All students of the University of Adelaide have access to complaints and appeals procedures regarding decisions made about their academic progress.

4.5.1 All Students

All students are entitled to make a complaint about the review of their academic progress according to the University's *Student Complaints Policy*, available at <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/policies/100/>

4.5.2 Undergraduate Students and Preclusion

Section 4.5.1 above does not apply to decisions to preclude undergraduate students. Appeals against preclusion are handled exclusively according to 5.3 below.

4.6 Timing of Review of Academic Progress

- a. The review of academic progress for all students in any year should be complete by the beginning of the following academic year.
- b. Where there has been an appeal or other delay, the review process for individual students may extend beyond the beginning of the following academic year. Where this occurs:
 - i Students must be allowed to enrol and participate in any appropriate courses, pending the outcome of the review and appeal process;
 - ii The review process for the individual student must be resolved by the census date for their first teaching session so he or she does not incur any tuition fees or debt for courses he or she is unable to continue on account of preclusion.

5 Procedures

5.1 Review of Academic Progress for Postgraduate Students

Reviews of academic progress for postgraduate students are conducted according to the procedures outlined in the relevant Annual Review of Progress (for higher degree by research students), Code of Practice (for most Masters Coursework students), Review of Academic Progress Policy (for designated Masters Coursework students) or Academic Program Rules (for Professional Doctorate students). See 4.1 above.

5.2 Review of Academic Progress for Undergraduate Students

5.2.1 Identifying and Notifying Students

- a. Each Faculty will use academic transcripts to identify all students who do not meet the published criteria for satisfactory academic performance.
- b. The Faculty will notify such students in writing that they do not meet the published criteria for satisfactory academic performance, and that their academic progress will be formally reviewed by the Faculty Review of Academic Progress Committee. The

notification must be sent via registered mail on the University proforma letter Advising Student of Unsatisfactory Academic Performance (**Appendix A**).

5.2.2 Review Submissions

- a. Students who do not meet the requirements for satisfactory academic performance will be invited to lodge a submission detailing:
 - Any personal circumstances (for example, illness and medical conditions, cultural factors, problems related to housing, finances, family or relationships) that may have affected or impeded their academic performance; and
 - Any actions they have taken or plan to take that may help to improve their performance.
- b. Students should be given **3 weeks** to prepare this submission.
- c. Such students will be clearly informed that the written submission represents their only opportunity for providing evidence in support of their case. (In the event of an appeal against preclusion, the Academic Progress Appeals Committee cannot take into consideration new or additional material provided by the student. See **5.3** below.)
- d. If the student fails to lodge a submission by the specified date, the review will proceed on the basis of his or her academic performance alone.
- e. Students are advised to consult the Education and Welfare Officers through StudentCare of the Student Union for assistance with the preparation of their submission.

5.2.3 Review of Academic Progress Committee

- a. Each Faculty will establish a Review of Academic Progress Committee to investigate cases where undergraduate students have not met the requirements for satisfactory academic progress.
- b. The Review of Academic Progress Committee will consist of the Associate Dean (Education) or equivalent as Convenor, at least one academic staff member, one administrative staff member and one student member from any area of the University.
- c. In considering each case referred to it, the Committee will assess the student's academic performance against his or her circumstances, and examine all documents and supporting evidence provided by the student.
- d. Taking into account all of the circumstances and remedial actions detailed in the submission (if provided), and the level and duration of the unsatisfactory academic performance, the Committee will assess the probable impact:
 - On past academic performance of all personal circumstances; and
 - On future academic performance of any of the personal circumstances that may continue into the next academic year, and of any remedial actions taken or proposed by the student.
- e. The Committee will notify the student in writing of the outcome of the review, and provide a summary of reasons for the outcome.

- i The reasons must be provided on the University proforma letter Advising Student of Result of Academic Review (**Appendix B**);
- ii Where the decision is to preclude the student, the letter Advising Student of Result of Academic Review must be accompanied with the University proforma Faculty Review Committee Report To Executive Dean In Preclusion Case (**Appendix C**).

5.2.4 Informal Review Outcomes

- a. An informal outcome for a review of academic progress means that there are no restrictions or conditions placed on the student's enrolment for the following academic year.
- b. The Committee will impose an informal outcome where the evidence provided adequately explains the student's academic performance over the period being considered, and/or indicates a reasonable probability that he or she can meet the prescribed criteria for satisfactory academic performance during the following academic year.
- c. An informal outcome may involve one or more recommendations designed to assist the student in improving his or her academic performance.
- d. Such recommendations may include, but are not limited to:
 - Reminding the student that a formal outcome will be applied should his or her academic performance not reach the required standard before the next review of academic progress occurs;
 - Encouraging the student to seek personal counselling and/or medical advice;
 - Encouraging the student to seek specific academic assistance or counselling through bodies such as the Centre for Learning and Professional Development (CLPD);
 - Encouraging the student to consider alternative course, program or career options.
- e. The recommendations included in an informal outcome are non-binding. However the student's failure to follow such a recommendation may be taken into account in any subsequent review of academic progress.
- f. The Committee is responsible for monitoring such recommendations.

5.2.5 Formal Review Outcomes

- a. A formal outcome for a review of academic progress means that one or more binding conditions may be placed on the student's enrolment for the following academic year.
- b. The Committee will recommend to the Executive Dean that a formal outcome be imposed where the evidence provided does not satisfactorily explain the student's academic performance, and does not indicate a reasonable probability that he or she can meet the faculty's criteria for satisfactory academic performance for the following year.
- c. The Executive Dean may impose one or more of the following formal outcomes:
 - Requiring the student not to enrol in any courses counting towards his or her program for a semester, or for a year, to enable him or her to address the

personal or medical difficulties identified as contributing to the unsatisfactory performance;

- Requiring the student not to enrol in any courses counting towards his or her program for a semester, or for a year, but to enrol in a specified number of courses and/or type of course in other programs;
 - Notifying the student that a specified formal outcome will be applied should his or her academic performance not reach a nominated standard by the end of the next semester of study following the review;
 - Restricting the student's enrolment to a specified number of courses and/or type of course;
 - Making the student's enrolment for the next semester or year conditional upon his or her seeking appropriate academic support services, remedial programs and/or personal counselling;
 - Precluding the student from further studies in the program.
- d. For each binding condition, the Executive Dean must specify the monitoring process, if any, and the consequences for non-compliance.
- e. Where a student does not comply with a binding condition, the Executive Dean may apply the formal outcome attached to that condition without further consideration.
- f. Preclusion may be included on the student's official academic transcript, in which case it will appear on transcripts ordered by the student for their own academic or other purposes. It will be part of the student's official academic history and cannot be amended or removed. Other formal outcomes may be included on the student's unofficial academic transcript, in which case they will appear to University of Adelaide staff who order a transcript for internal administrative purposes, but will not appear on transcripts ordered by the student for their own purposes.

5.2.6 Formal Outcomes and International Students

- a. Migration regulations limit the formal outcomes that can be applied to international students.
- b. International students cannot be:
- Restricted to a study load of less than 75%;
 - Required to have a compulsory year or semester away from their studies. If exceptional medical or compassionate circumstances significantly contribute to the student's poor academic performance, he or she can apply for leave of absence according to the University's *Leave of Absence Policy*, available at <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/policies/xx>.
- c. Migration regulations also impose additional administrative requirements on the University. Where an international student is precluded, the Executive Dean and the International Student Centre must follow the procedures outlined in 6 below.

5.2.7 Notification and Report of Preclusion

- a. The Committee's recommendation to the Executive Dean must be accompanied by a report (proforma attached as **Appendix C**) outlining the:
- Academic grounds for review;
 - Information and documents considered by the Committee;

- Medical, personal, cultural and/or compassionate factors taken into account;
 - Student proposals or action(s) taken to improve academic performance; and
 - Main reasons underlying the Committee's recommendation(s).
- b. A copy of this report must be provided to the student, accompanied by the University proforma letter Advising Student of Result of Academic Review (**Appendix B**).
- c. The Executive Dean will notify the student in writing of his or her decision regarding the Committee's recommendation.

5.3 Appeals Against Preclusion for Undergraduate Students

5.3.1 Academic Progress Appeals Committee

Where a review of academic progress results in a finding of unsatisfactory performance, an Executive Dean may preclude the student from further studies in the program according to the procedures outlined in the relevant Faculty Review of Academic Progress Policy. Students are entitled to appeal against the Executive Dean's preclusion decision through the University's Academic Progress Appeals Committee.

5.3.2 Grounds for Appeal

- a. The grounds for such an appeal were approved by Academic Board (5/99 – 6 October 1999) and endorsed by University Council (7/99 – 25 October 1999). A student must be able to demonstrate that procedural fairness was not adhered to in the review progress, in that:
- i The decision to preclude was not made in a fair and impartial way; and/or
 - ii The process leading to that decision breaches the procedures outlined in the relevant Faculty Review of Academic Progress Policy.
- b. Accordingly, the Academic Progress Appeals Committee cannot consider an appeal that is based on:
- The student's dissatisfaction with the Executive Dean's decision to preclude; and/or
 - Claims that the merits of the case were incorrectly or inappropriately assessed; and/or
 - Supporting documentation or evidence additional to that provided by the student to the Faculty Review of Academic Progress Committee.
- c. The academic progress appeals provisions are designed to protect the rights of students to procedural fairness in the preparation of their submission, and the hearing and determining of their review of academic progress. Students should attempt to assess whether there has been a possible breach of procedural fairness by reference to the principles outlined above in 4.3.
- d. Breaches of academic progress review procedures that are deemed to be insignificant and not to have had any impact on the preparation of the submission and/or the decision to preclude do not constitute grounds for appeal.
- e. Breaches of any academic progress review procedure that are deemed to be significant and to have had an impact on the preparation of the submission and/or the decision to preclude do constitute grounds for appeal.

- f. Students who wish to appeal against a preclusion decision should contact Student Policy and Appeals within **15 business days** of the date of issue of the Executive Dean's preclusion notification letter.
- g. Student Policy and Appeals will examine the report and other documents related to the student's review of academic progress to assess whether or not there are grounds for an appeal according to the criteria in **5.3.2a** and **b** above.

5.3.3 Where Grounds for Appeal Exist

- a. Where the supporting evidence provided by the student indicates that there are eligible grounds for an appeal, Student Policy and Appeals will:
 - i Advise the student of the process for lodging an appeal;
 - ii Convene an Academic Progress Appeals Committee; and
 - iii Serve as the Secretary for that Committee.
- b. The Academic Progress Appeals Committee will examine all available documents and other evidence:
 - i Related to the procedures used by the faculty in precluding the student; and/or
 - ii Supporting the student's claims that the decision to preclude was not fair and impartial.
- c. Where the Committee finds that there were no significant procedural breaches, and/or that the preclusion decision was made fairly and impartially, it will notify the student and the faculty in writing that the preclusion is upheld, and provide a summary of the reasons for its finding(s).
- d. Where the Committee finds that there were significant procedural breaches and/or that the preclusion decision was not made in a fair and impartial manner, it will notify the student and the faculty in writing that the preclusion is overturned, and provide a summary of the reasons for its finding(s).
- e. Where the preclusion is overturned, the Faculty will have the following options:
 - i Immediately review the student's academic progress again, according to the relevant Faculty Review of Academic Progress Policy
 - ii Decide not to review the student's academic progress again in the current review cycle
 - iii Decide to review the student's academic progress at the end of the next semester or academic year

Faculties cannot review the student's academic progress again where such a review would extend beyond the census date for any course the student is currently undertaking, according to **4.6** above.

5.3.4 Where No Grounds for Appeal Exist

Where the supporting evidence provided by the student indicates there are no eligible grounds for an appeal, Student Policy and Appeals will prepare a report for the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Academic) recommending that an Academic Progress Appeal Committee not be convened.

- a. Where the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Academic) accepts the recommendation, Student Policy and Appeals will notify the student in writing that:

- i No eligible grounds for an appeal have been satisfactorily established;
 - ii An Academic Progress Appeals Committee will not be convened;
 - iii No other University grievance processes are available to the student to further pursue the matter.
- b. Where the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Academic) does not accept the recommendation of Student Policy and Appeals, an Academic Progress Appeal Committee will be convened according to 5.3.3 above.
- c. The student is entitled to pursue the matter through an external agency such as the Office of the State Ombudsman <http://www.ombudsman.sa.gov.au/> at any stage, irrespective of the decisions made by the University regarding the handling of the review and appeal.

5.3.5 Finalisation of Preclusion Decisions

A decision to preclude will become final only when:

- The **15 business days** period for application for appeal expires; or
- Student Policy and Appeals makes an assessment that there are no eligible grounds on which to base an appeal (see 5.3.2 above); or
- The Academic Progress Appeals Committee upholds the decision to preclude.

The Faculty will record the preclusion on the student's academic transcript when the decision is final.

5.4 Preclusion of Onshore International Students

5.4.1 Satisfactory Academic Performance

Student **visa condition 8202** requires that international students achieve 'satisfactory academic performance', as determined by the University's policies and procedures. The University deems that an international student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic performance if they are precluded from their studies.

5.4.2 Reporting Unsatisfactory Academic Performance

In compliance with the *National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students*, and the *Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act, 2000*, the University will notify DIMA if an international student is precluded from their studies.

5.4.3 Faculty Notification

Where an Executive Dean precludes an international student, he or she will send a copy of the notice of preclusion letter to the International Student Centre.

5.4.4 Student Policy and Appeals and International Student Centre

The International Student Centre and Student Policy and Appeals will liaise during the **15 business days** period (see 5.3.2f above) that students are entitled to appeal against their preclusion, and during any actual appeal, so that both areas remain aware of any international students who intend to appeal, and of the outcome of any appeal.

5.4.5 Implications of Finalisation

As soon as practicable after the decision has become final, according to 5.3.5, the International Student Centre, will:

- a. In accordance with **section 19** of the *ESOS Act*, notify DIMA through PRISMS that the student has made unsatisfactory progress, and has consequently been precluded;
- b. In accordance with **section 20** of the *ESOS Act*, send students a proforma non-compliance notice advising that they have breached **visa condition 8202** by failing to maintain satisfactory academic performance.

5.4.6 Visas

The University's reporting of an international student's failure to maintain satisfactory academic performance will trigger DIMA's automatic visa cancellation process. Details on visa requirements are available at DIMA's Website at <http://www.immi.gov.au/study/>

6. Responsibilities

6.1 Approval of Review of Academic Progress Policies, Codes and Rules

- a. All faculty Review of Academic Progress Policies for undergraduate students must be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Academic).
- b. The *Code of Practice for Postgraduate Coursework Studies* must be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Academic).
- c. The Annual Review of Progress in the *Research Student Handbook* must be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies.
- d. The Program Rules for Professional Doctorates must be endorsed by the University's Research Education and Development Committee (REDC) and Program Approval Committee (PAC).

6.2 Monitoring Faculty Review Procedures

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Academic) may request from faculties any details of the review process, including the number of students reviewed, the number of students precluded, the citizenship status of students reviewed or precluded, and all formal and informal outcomes imposed.

7. Delegations of Authority

Key	Authority Category	Authority	Delegation Holder	Limits
Academic	Reviews of Grades and Appeals	Approve the outcomes of academic reviews, excluding preclusion	Associate Dean (Education) or equivalent as Convenor, Review of Academic Progress Committee	Recommendation of the Faculty Review of Academic Progress Committee
		Approve the preclusion of a student based on their academic performance	Executive Dean	Recommendation of the Faculty Review of Academic Progress Committee

8. Implementation and Review

Faculty offices, Student Policy and Appeals, International Student Centre

7. Communication

This policy and the individual faculty academic progress review policies underlying it are available on the University's Policies Website at <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/policies/1803/>