

Student Progression, Exclusion and Graduation Policy and Procedures

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Contacts	policy@imc.edu.au		
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1. PURPOSE

At the Institute, the maintenance of high academic standards and graduate outcomes is a priority. It is expected that a student’s academic achievement will meet the required minimum standards, and that progress through a course will be satisfactory.

This policy details the processes by which the academic progress of each student is monitored so that students can be provided with advice and support to facilitate their successful course completion. It also defines the grounds for exclusion related to a validated lack of progress and details confirmation of student course completion and eligibility to graduate.

Decisions related to academic progression, exclusion and graduation are fair and based on consistent and transparent principles and processes.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to students of the Institute, and all staff of the Institute responsible for the management of student academic progress, student support and maintenance of academic standards.

3. DEFINITIONS

Academic risk is identified when students have not maintained satisfactory academic progress and are at risk of facing sanctions and/or not completing their course within prescribed time frames if performance does not improve.

Census date is the last day students can withdraw from a course without academic penalty.

Co-requisite Unit is a unit that must be taken in the same semester as a related unit. Co-requisite units contain complementary associated knowledge which is essential for success in both units.

Department of Home Affairs (DHA) is the Department responsible for immigration and customs border policy.

Domestic student is a student who is one of the following:

- An Australian citizen (including Australian citizens with dual citizenship);
- A New Zealand citizen (including New Zealand citizens with dual citizenship);
- An Australian permanent resident; or
- An Australian humanitarian visa holder.

Education Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS) is the legislative framework of requirements and standards for the quality assurance of education and training institutions offering courses to international students who are in Australia on a student visa. The ESOS Act also provides tuition fee protection for international students.

Exclusion/Cancellation is where a student's enrolment is cancelled. A student may not re-enrol during the period of exclusion.

Graduation is the formal conferral of an award following the completion of all requirements of a course.

International student is any student who is not a domestic student (see above definition of Domestic Student).

Intervention occurs when a student is identified as being potentially at risk of not maintaining satisfactory academic progress. It involves counselling and supporting students in a bid to improve their academic performance and standards.

Leave of absence is a period that allows students to take a temporary break from studies once they have completed one or more semesters of their enrolled course. A leave of absence allows a student to interrupt her or his studies for a compelling reason; for example, a sustained medical condition that prevents attendance or a personal matter requiring absence from campus.

Pre-requisite Unit is a unit that must be successfully completed before a student is permitted to enrol in a subsequent or related unit. The purpose of making a unit pre-requisite to another unit is to ensure that the student has the foundation knowledge and skills to advance to subsequent related units.

Satisfactory academic progress refers to the minimum level of progress required to maintain academic standards for successful completion of a unit and/or course. A student who is not meeting 50% of course requirements will be nominated as making unsatisfactory progress

Student visas are temporary visas allowing international students to study at an Australian educational institution for a specified length of time.

4. PROCEDURES

Progress Monitoring

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of the Dean to monitor the progress of students in their enrolled course.
- 4.2 It is the responsibility of academic staff to monitor student academic progress, and to provide timely formative feedback to students in the relevant unit of study.

- 4.3 It is the responsibility of the unit coordinator and Dean to ensure compliance with the Institute Teaching and Learning Plan, which provides for specific monitoring of students' academic progress and mechanisms for identifying students 'at risk' in each unit of study.
- 4.4 Unit Lecturers and the Academic Administration team are responsible for ensuring that the requirements for each unit and course of study are satisfactorily completed. This responsibility includes ensuring that students who may be at risk of failure or are deemed to need assistance are identified, counselled and supported whenever possible, and that accurate records of student progression, achievement and completion are maintained and communicated as required.
- 4.5 Information regarding student academic support services, including academic skills sessions and language support sessions, is made available on the Institute's Learning Management System, Moodle, and in unit outlines.
- 4.6 All students must follow the rules of the course to complete the course. This includes meeting all pre-requisite and co-requisite unit requirements. In exceptional circumstances, the Dean may allow students to enrol in a unit without the necessary pre-requisite or co-requisite requirements being met.
- 4.7 Any changes to the rules relating to pre-requisite or co-requisite units must be proposed by the Dean and approved by the Academic Board.

Minimum Period of Candidature

- 4.8 To graduate with an award, the minimum period of candidature in the award course is as follows;
 - *Undergraduate courses*, a student normally is required to complete a minimum of one-third of their study at the Institute. For a three-year degree of 144 credit points, a student normally is required to complete 48 credit points at the Institute.
 - *Postgraduate courses*, a student normally is required to complete a minimum of one-half of their study at the Institute.
- 4.9 Units completed on a non-award basis at the Institute are considered to be study at the Institute for the purpose of determining minimum period of candidature.
- 4.10 The application of recognised prior learning (RPL) to an award course of study, pursuant to Institute RPL policy, that reduces the period of candidature below the minimum threshold will not itself prevent graduation with that award.

Maximum Candidature

- 4.11 The normal maximum period of candidature for a course is as follows:
 - Master's Degree of 2 years duration or less: 6 years;
 - Graduate Diploma: 4 years;
 - Graduate Certificate: 3 years;
 - Bachelor's Degree (including Associate Degree): 10 years;
 - Undergraduate Diploma: 3 years.

The time period is calculated from the date when study first commences.

Completion of a course within the maximum candidature period ensures that the qualification is based on current knowledge and skills.

- 4.12 Students are only permitted leave of absence during the course through formal agreement with the Institute on the grounds of compassionate or compelling circumstances (e.g. illness where a medical certificate states that the student is unable to attend classes).

Leave of absence will normally only be granted for a maximum of:

- One semester from a course with one year full time duration;
- Two semesters from a course with two or more years full time duration.

International Student Progression

- 4.13 All international students are required to make satisfactory academic progress during their studies at the Institute. Conditions related to international students are further governed by ESOS legislation and the requirements of the National Code 2018.

- 4.14 The unit lecturer monitors each international student's progress. Students at risk are counselled and, where appropriate, placed on an intervention strategy.

- 4.15 The administration will make any enrolment amendments and variations in accord with the Institute's International Students Enrolment Amendments and Variations Guidelines.

Early Intervention

- 4.16 A student is classified as potentially at academic risk when it is noted by the unit lecturer that a student is:

- not attending lectures and/or tutorials regularly; and/or
- not performing adequately in assessment tasks.

- 4.17 The Academic Support Team will be notified of students potentially at academic risk by lecturers and tutors. All possible means of contact with these students will be made. The staff in the Academic Support Team will then counsel identified students to do one or more of the following:

- attend academic skills sessions;
- attend language support sessions;
- attend extra tutorial groups;
- attend one-to-one support;
- attend counselling;
- seek mentoring.

Intervention Strategy

- 4.18 The Institute will provide extensive assistance to students with their studies. However, if at the end of a semester a student has not achieved satisfactory academic progress after early intervention, the student will be placed on an intervention strategy.

- 4.19 In an intervention strategy the following will occur:

- (i) A warning letter will be sent to the student by email.

(ii) The student will be contacted by email and phone and asked to attend an interview with the Dean or her or his delegate.

(iii) At the interview the student will be counselled as to the suitability or otherwise of the student continuing her or his course, advised of the risks faced by, and the options available to, her or him and the availability of course advice and support services.

(iv) The interview will outline the required steps that are to be taken to improve the student's performance at the Institute. A record of the interview will be placed on the student's file.

(v) If the decision is made to permit the student to continue to study at the Institute, he or she will provide a study plan to be considered by the Dean or her or his delegate. The study plan must be approved by the Dean.

(vi) An international student will be advised that if he or she continues to make unsatisfactory academic progress in the following semester, this will be reported to the DHA, and in consequence, the student's visa may be affected.

Exclusion

4.20 The Academic and Student Support Officers will monitor the academic progress of each student and implement remedial support for those students deemed in need of assistance to achieve satisfactory progression (refer to the Intervention Strategy).

4.21 A student may be excluded from a course of study if he or she:

- exceeds the maximum period of candidature;
- having attempted all assessment tasks, fails more than 50% of the course in two consecutive semesters and does not provide a convincing explanation as to why he or she should not be excluded;
- fails more than 50% of the course in a semester without attending any classes and/or attempting any assessments and does not provide a convincing explanation as to why he or she should not be excluded;
- fails a core unit twice; or
- is in breach of any other Institute policy providing for exclusion.

4.22 If an international student is excluded, the Institute will report that international student to the DHA as stipulated by the National Code 2018. The student will receive a notice of intention to cancel or suspend their enrolment together with information on any available appeals process. The student is entitled to make an appeal through IMC's internal complaints and appeals process within 20 working days. For any exclusion, a written report will be kept of the procedures undertaken with the student and the resultant outcomes.

4.23 Initial exclusion shall be for a period of at least one year. Students who are excluded for a second time may be excluded for a period of up to five years. Students who wish to continue study after the period of exclusion must reapply to IMC following the guidelines in the Student Selection and Admission Policy.

4.24 Students may apply for special permission to attempt a core unit for the third time. Applications must be made in writing to the Dean and accompanied by supporting evidence as to why the student is likely to pass the core unit if permitted to enrol.

Graduation

- 4.25 It is the responsibility of the Dean to ensure that records of student progression, achievement and completion are comprehensive and accurate. The Dean must ensure that a student has satisfactorily completed all course requirements before recommending to the Chair of Academic Board that the student is eligible to be admitted to the award of a prescribed qualification. The list of students approved by the Chair of Academic Board will be presented to the Institute Council. The Institute Council will approve a list of students who are eligible to be awarded a qualification and to graduate.
- 4.26 Students who have a financial debt with the Institute will have their final grade withheld and will not be permitted to graduate until the debt has been paid or arrangements for payment have been approved by the Accounting Department.
- 4.27 Students who are eligible to graduate should apply to the Student Services by the prescribed date to attend the relevant graduation ceremony.
- 4.28 Approved academic dress must be worn by graduates at the graduation ceremonies.
- 4.29 Graduates who are unable to attend a graduation ceremony will have the appropriate award conferred by the Institute in absentia.
- 4.30 Graduates of the Institute will be entitled to become members of the Alumni Association and to display the award conferred.
- 4.31 The Institute has introduced a scholarship and awards scheme to recognise and encourage academic excellence. These scholarships and awards will be presented at Graduation and will follow the criterion set out in the Scholarship and Awards Guideline.

5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- i. Assessment Policy and Procedure (Coursework)
- ii. Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures
- iii. Scholarship Terms and Conditions
- iv. Code of Conduct for Students
- v. International Students Enrolment Amendments and Variations Procedures
- vi. Student Academic Integrity Policy
- vii. Student Selection and Admissions Policy
- viii. Intervention Strategies, Procedures and Guidance Note

6. VERSION CONTROL

Historical Version	Approved by	Approval Date
2020.07	Academic Board	27 July 2020
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