

## STUDENT STUDY LOAD PROCEDURE

<b>Category</b>	Procedure		
<b>Review</b>	3 years from date of Approval		
<b>Code</b>	AP045P		
<b>Contacts</b>	policy@imc.edu.au		
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2024.10	Deputy President (Education)	10 October 2024	10 October 2027

### 1 PURPOSE

The Australian National Institute of Management and Commerce (the Institute or IMC) has a structured process for handling students' study load to ensure they complete the course within the duration specified in their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE). Under particular circumstances, it is appropriate to facilitate a variation to standard study loads. This document aims to provide information about the implications of monitoring, reducing or increasing study loads, the typical situations where study load variations may be justified, the processes for applying for study load variations, and the matters students must check before applying. This document should be read in conjunction with the *Student Study Load Policy*.

### 2 PROCEDURES

#### 2.1 Monitoring Study Load

The Institute monitors students' study loads to ensure that they complete their courses within the expected duration specified in their CoE. The Administrator is required to review PRISMS reports monthly to confirm that CoEs are issued for no longer than the approved duration as registered on CRICOS.

During the enrolment period, the Student Administration must verify that all international students are enrolled in the standard study load via the Student Management System (SMS), except where a reduced study load has been formally approved. The SMS will prevent students from enrolling in a non-standard study load without prior authorisation and will direct them to contact the academic support team for further assistance.

The Institute also monitors student course progress through academic performance to ensure that students remain on track to complete their course within the duration of their e-CoE. An

intervention strategy will be implemented for students at risk of failing to make satisfactory academic progress. Refer to the *Student Progression, Exclusion and Graduation Policy and Procedures* and the *Intervention Strategies, Procedures, and Guidance Note* for further details.

## **2.2 Reducing Study Load**

In some circumstances, students can reduce study loads without negative ramifications to their study program if the course of study can be completed within the maximum required timeframe. Students considering reducing their study load should refer to the Institute's *Student Progression, Exclusion and Graduation Policy and Procedures* for details on maximum candidature and other information relating to full-time and part-time study options.

Domestic students should be aware that reduced loads may impact eligibility for government financial assistance. International students must check the visa implications of reducing their study load. Students on an International Student Visa may only undertake a reduced study load under compassionate or compelling circumstances (Appendix A) or as part of an intervention strategy for students at risk of not achieving satisfactory academic progress.

The Institute's *Student Handbook* and *International Students Enrolment Amendments and Variations Procedures* provide essential information on study load requirements for international students.

## **2.3 Overloading**

Overloading refers to studying one or more units over and above the Institute's standard study load each term. The Institute will generally consider applications for students to overload where:

- a student has to overload to complete the course by the end of a given period (e.g. expiry of a visa) or
- an additional unit of study (that causes the overload) is a prerequisite for a unit that must be completed in the following term of study.

There may be other circumstances where overloading is appropriate, and the Institute will decide on a case-by-case basis. Approval is not automatic. The application and approval process for overloading are described below.

## **2.4 Applying for Variation to Study Load**

Students applying for study load variations must submit a *Variation to Study Load Application Form* or *Non-standard Enrolment Form* (available on the Institute's website) to the Academic Support Office. Applications cannot be lodged before academic results are available for the previous term of study. However, they should be lodged soon after the results are released to allow time for consideration before the deadline for adding units of study. Students should also consult with the Academic Support Office to determine which form is appropriate for their situation and note any specific details and requirements outlined on the application forms.

The Academic Support Office will consider applications for overloading, and the Director of Teaching and Learning in consultation if needed with the Deputy President (Education) will make the final decision. The decision to approve will be based on assessing the student's capacity to successfully complete a higher study load than the standard load. Students must show that their revised study plan does not impact the possibility of completing the course within an appropriate period. Prerequisite units can still be completed, and students will not have the recommended assumed knowledge diminished for any remaining units due to the overload.

Students must seek academic advice from the Academic Support Office before applying to vary a study load. The Academic Support Office is available for general advice on study loads, but it does not make the final determination on an application. In addition, discipline or unit coordinators can provide specific information relevant to their discipline area.

Before applying for a variation to a standard study load, students must check.

- Relevant professional accreditation requirements
- The terms of any scholarship awards
- Fee implications
- Census dates and other progression implications
- Compliance with requirements of relevant government agencies

The last point above is crucial for international student visa holders, as a variation in study load might affect the duration of their studies. For further information, refer to the Institute's *International Student Enrolment Amendments and Variations Procedures*.

Students applying to overload must demonstrate that units can be completed without timetable clashes. Further, it must be possible to meet assessment deadlines for all units. Issues arising from overloading are not grounds for appeals and / or applications for extensions or special consideration. Students granted permission to vary study loads are not provided additional support or provisions beyond what is regularly available to students at the Institute.

## **2.5 Approval of Application for Study Load Variation**

The Director of Learning and Teaching will decide the outcome of applications for overloading in consultation with the Senior Academic Manager, who will decide upon applications to reduce the study load.

The decision on an application to vary a study load will be communicated in writing to the student within five working days of applying. The Academic Support Office communicates with the students and staff and updates relevant records.

Students have the right to appeal a decision. The appeal must be in writing and state the grounds upon which it is based. For further information, refer to the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

### 3 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- i. *Student Progression, Exclusion and Graduation Policy and Procedures*
- ii. *Intervention Strategies, Procedures and Guidance Note*
- iii. *Student Handbook*
- iv. *International Student Enrolment Amendments and Variations Procedures*
- v. *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*
- vi. *Variation to Study Load Application Form*
- vii. *Non-standard Enrolment Form*

### 4 VERSION CONTROL

Historical Version	Approved by	Approval Date
2024.10	Deputy President (Education)	10 October 2024
2024.06	Academic Board	27 June 2024
2021.04	Academic Board	19 April 2021
2018.10	Academic Board	23 October 2018

*The Deputy President (Education) oversees the implementation and compliance of this procedure. Please contact the Deputy President's office for any enquiries or clarifications related to this policy.*

## Appendix A

### Evidence List to Assess Compassionate and Compelling Reasons

Circumstance	Evidence
Serious illness or injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A medical certificate from the registered health practitioner who is treating students' condition that includes the dates of consultation, the medical condition, impact of the condition on your ability to study, recommendation for a reduced study load or break from study, and treatment plan</li> </ul>
Bereavement of close family members such as parents, siblings or grandparents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Death certificate (if possible)</li> <li>• Evidence of the illness from a doctor or hospital</li> <li>• Evidence of relationship (e.g. birth certificate, passport, family record book, etc.)</li> </ul>
Permanent or temporary disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical certificate or letter from doctor recommending a reduced study load or a break from study</li> </ul>
Incident or issue impacting student's capacity to study – personal (e.g. serious accident, witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime or incident)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police report</li> <li>• Letter from psychologist that includes the dates of consultation, the outcome of the assessment, the impact on the student's ability to study, the recommendation for a reduced study load or break from study, and treatment plan</li> </ul>
Incident or issue impacting student's capacity to study – community issue (e.g. political unrest, natural disaster, community health event, other community issues limiting access to what a student needs for study)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media reports of political unrest or natural disaster</li> <li>• Evidence of student's residency in the affected area</li> <li>• Personal statement outlining how the issue impacts your ability to study</li> </ul>
Delay in receiving a student visa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter from the Department of Home Affairs</li> </ul>
Failing occasional units throughout the course, but have not done so poorly to have been picked up by the intervention strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic transcript or other records demonstrating academic performance</li> </ul>
Other circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any relevant certified document attesting that the situation is outside student's control and affects their ability to study</li> </ul>