



Course Progression and Graduation Policy

Academic Board Approved Document

Churchill Institute of Higher Education

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Benchmarking	Australian Institute of Higher Education Macquarie University Southern Cross University University of Newcastle Western Sydney University

Version History

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v2.1 26 April 2022 Minor amendments in response to TEQSA CRICOS initial assessment report

1. Preamble

1.1 Purpose

The Course Progression and Graduation Policy ('the Policy') of Churchill Institute of Higher Education ('the Institute') includes guidance for monitoring the progress and attendance of international students, as well as reporting unsatisfactory course progress and attendance. The Policy identifies attendance requirements for international students, when an appropriate extension of the duration of the course is allowed and the obligation of the student to contact the Australian Department of Home Affairs (DHA) should there be any alteration in the duration of their course that could impact their visa status.

1.2 Background

The Policy the Institute's obligations to comply with ESOS Act and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 ('National Code 2018') in accordance with Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) registration requirements to safeguard the integrity of Australian migration laws by supporting international students in fulfilling their student visa requirements to complete their course within the required duration, as well as meeting the requirements for progress and attendance of the course. This includes monitoring and reporting on Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISM), rules for meeting course completion requirements, grounds for exclusion related to lack of satisfactory academic progress, and confirmation of student course completion and eligibility to graduate.

1.3 Definitions

For definitions, refer to the *Dictionary of Terms*.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all students enrolled in the Institute.

3. Policy Statement

Students are expected to progress through their course as per allowed time frame (3 year full time) and to maintain a satisfactory academic standard. The Institute will monitor, record and assess the course progress of each student for the course in which they are enrolled.

4. Course Progression Policy

Once students enroll in a course of study at the Institute, their progression through to graduation will be dependent upon meeting the minimum requirement of the course as set out in this Policy, and if necessary, academic intervention will take place upon review of the student's academic progression.

4.1 Early Intervention – Students at Risk of Inadequate Academic Progress

The Institute considers that satisfactory attendance in all unit learning activities and attempting all compulsory assessment events is critical to students' academic success. The Institute will track student course progress throughout their study through systematic monitoring of their attendance at learning activities and their results of formal assessment tasks within the course that they are enrolled in.

4.1.1 The initial identification of students at potential risk of inadequate academic progress is the responsibility of the unit lecturer. Compulsory attendance records of student's attendance at all compulsory learning activities will be maintained by each unit lecturer. After the first assessment

event in a unit (or the conclusion of week five of the teaching period if no assessment event has occurred), the unit lecturer will identify any student enrolled in their unit that they consider to be potentially 'at risk' of inadequate academic progress. A unit lecturer should classify a student as potentially at risk when the unit lecturer identifies that the student has:

- a. not attended at least 80% of compulsory learning activities (e.g. lectures and/or tutorials); or
- b. not attempted, or attempted but performed inadequately, in any assessment task. A grade of less than 50% in any assessment task will be considered a signal of inadequate performance in an assessment task.

4.1.2 The Unit Lecturer will write an "Initial Letter of Concern Regarding Academic Progress" to each student enrolled in their unit they identified as potentially "at risk." The letter will advise the student of the Unit Lecturer's concern, remind them of their academic progress responsibilities and invite the student to contact the Unit Lecturer to discuss additional learning support. A student counselling session will also be offered if the student identifies their inadequate progress is a result of non-academic related issues.

4.1.3 Where the student fails to contact the Unit Lecturer within 10 working days of receipt of the "Initial Letter of Concern" or fails to address the factors that have been identified as affecting their academic progress, the Unit Lecturer will immediately advise the Course Coordinator who will issue the student with a "Second Letter of Concern Regarding Academic Progress." This letter will advise the student of their classification as a "student at risk" and request the student attend a meeting with the Course Coordinator and Student Counsellor within 10 working days of receipt of the letter to arrange an academic counselling session.

4.2 During the academic counselling session, the Course Coordinator, Student Counsellor, and the student will determine what support is appropriate. This may include, but is not limited to:

- a. The student attending Academic Support Sessions;
- b. The student receiving individual case management from the Student Counsellor;
- c. The student receiving assistance with personal issues which are influencing academic progress;
- d. The student receiving mentoring from senior students at the Institute;
- e. A reduction in the student's study load; or
- f. A combination of the above.

4.3 During the academic counselling sessions, the student will also be advised that continued failure to meet minimum academic standards could lead to conditions being placed on enrolment and/or to enrolment being terminated.

4.4 A record of the academic counselling session and any additional support to be provided will be documented in a "Learning Support Plan" which is signed by the Course Coordinator, Student Counsellor and the student and placed on the student's file. The Course Coordinator is responsible for tracking the support being provided by the Institute and the student's compliance with the agreed Learning Support Plan.

4.5 Where the student either fails to respond to the Course Coordinator's request for an academic counselling session or fails to comply with the Learning Support Plan, the Course Coordinator will immediately notify the Dean. The Dean will issue the student with a letter of "Notice of Intention to Cancel Enrolment" and request the student attend a meeting with the Dean and the Course Coordinator within seven working days to discuss the Institute's concerns with the student's academic progress. As a result of that meeting the Dean may:

- i. prescribe the student undertake an alternative Learning Support Plan;
- ii. approve a reduction of the student's study load;
- iii. place probationary provisions on the student;
- iv. commence the process of terminating the student's enrolment (refer Section 4.11).

4.6 Monitoring course progression at the end of each teaching period

- a. All students are required to meet minimum course progression standards. The Institute will monitor, assess and record the academic performance of students against the minimum academic standard as set out in this Policy. The monitoring process will take place at the end of each study period and will include the result for all units in the relevant study period. Students who are awarded more than one supplementary or deferred exam or who have unfinalised grades will not be included in the monitoring process until their grades are finalised.
- b. Students will be considered as not meeting the Institute's minimum course progression standards if they:
 - i. fail a unit more than once; or
 - ii. fail 50% or more of the units attempted in a semester.
- c. The Course Coordinator will monitor the academic performance of students against the minimum course progression standards by reviewing each student's grades awarded at the end of each teaching term. After ratification of each semester's results by the Academic Board and publication of results, the Course Coordinator will compile a course progression report for Academic Board within five (5) days. That report will list each enrolled student's results to date and their academic status determined in accordance with Section 4.7 of this Policy.

4.7 Academic Status

- a. Upon monitoring and reviewing a student's academic progress, and based on a student's academic performance, academic status will be granted with the following classification:
 - *Good standing* – the student's academic performance in the most recent teaching period is satisfactory.
 - *At risk* – the student is identified as needing to take steps immediately to improve academic performance to make satisfactory progress in the future teaching period.
 - *On probation* – the student identified as not making satisfactory progress performance and who will be required to engage in an intervention plan to improve his or her academic performance.

4.8 Failure to make satisfactory Academic Progress

- a. A student who fails to comply with the progression rules and fails to achieve minimum academic standards will be put in the category of either at risk, or on probation.
- b. Depending on the Academic Status, the students who do not make satisfactory academic progress are expected to take responsibility for improving their academic performance in the next teaching period.
- c. Students with 'at risk' academic status will be given a warning of the possible consequences of failing to meet the minimum academic standards and encouraged to seek academic help to improve their performance.
- d. Students with 'on probation' academic status will be given support to improve their academic performance through an academic intervention program and required to meet extra conditions in the next teaching period.
- e. Support for students with an "at risk" or "on probation" academic status will be determined by the Dean and Course Coordinator in accordance with paragraphs 4.2 to 4.4 of this policy.
Monitoring of students deemed 'at risk' or "on probation" will be overseen by the relevant Course Coordinator reporting to the Dean.

4.9 *Maximum time to complete the course*

- a. Students must meet the 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.
- b. The maximum period of candidature for Bachelor of Business course (total 24 units) at the Institute is six (6) years. The time elapsed will be calculated from the date that a student commenced their first semester of study. In exceptional circumstances, the Dean may approve an extension of a further two (2) years to a maximum candidature of eight (8) years. International students are only permitted to apply for an extension of course duration with supporting evidence where:
 - i. compassionate or compelling circumstances exist, including (but not limited to):
 - serious physical or mental illness, sickness, misadventure or other circumstances beyond a student's control which may:
 - prevent completion of a unit requirement,
 - prevent attendance at an assessable activity,
 - prevent submission of assessable work for a unit,
 - significantly affect performance in any graded assessments. loss or bereavement, such as death of a close family member, family/relationship breakdown.
 - hardship/trauma, such as victim of crime, sudden loss of income or employment or severe disruption to domestic arrangements; or
 - ii. CHIE has implemented, or is in the process of implementing, an intervention strategy because the student is at risk of not meeting course progress requirements; or
 - iii. CHIE has previously approved a deferral or suspension of the student's enrolment.

Documented evidence will be required to support the application.

- c. Students who fail to complete course requirements within the specified frame will have their enrolment terminated and a statement noting that the maximum period of candidature has been exceeded will appear on the final academic transcript issued to the student.
- d. Prior to termination students will be advised in writing by the Dean of the decision to terminate their enrolment and will also be advised that they have twenty (20) days from receiving notification of the decision to terminate their enrolment to appeal the decision.

4.10 *Procedure for Course Extension*

The course extension process includes the following procedures

- a. Submission of Course Extension request

If an international student's visa expires early and they still have units to complete, they will need to submit an application to the institution to extend their COE and apply to the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) for a new student visa.

- b. Extension request assessment, reporting and outcome

The extension to course duration request is assessed as per the guidelines explained in this Policy. As per National Code 2018, Standard 8, requests for an extension to course duration from an international student can only be approved for compassionate or compelling circumstances with supporting documentary evidence.

- c. Appealing the outcome

In compliance with the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures, students have the right to lodge a complaint about a decision resulting in their application for an extension to

their course duration being rejected.

d. Recording

Extensions to course duration are recorded accordingly and reported on PRISMS.

4.1.1 Students who Continue to Fail to Meet Satisfactory Course Progress

- a. A student with an “at risk” or “on probation” academic classification will be deemed to have not met satisfactory course progress at the time they either:
 - i. fail to respond within seven days of the request contained in the Dean’s “Notice of Intention to Cancel Enrolment” as stipulated in Section 4.5 of this policy;
 - ii. fail to meet a condition or obligation agreed to in an academic intervention plan as prescribed in Section 4.8 d of this policy;
 - iii. continue to fail to meet the minimum course progression standards contained in section 4.6b.
- b. A student who fails to complete their program of study within the maximum time (Section 4.9b) will be deemed to have not met satisfactory progress at the date of expiration of the maximum period from their enrolment in the course or the expiration of any approved date of course extension.
- c. On determination that a student has continued to fail to meet satisfactory course progress the Dean will issue the student with a written Notice of Intention to Cancel Enrolment. This notice will also advise the student that they have twenty (20) days from receiving notification of the decision to terminate their enrolment to appeal the decision. Any such appeal will be assessed in accordance with Section 8 of this policy.

5. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

CIHE students with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background might require special attention and support for academic success, will be identified early in their study at the Institute.

5.1 The Course Coordinator will prepare and present a report about the identified students to the Academic Board at least twice a year.

5.2 The Course Coordinator report about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander will, as a minimum, include the following aspects of their study:

- a. Number of students enrolled in each course/major;
- b. Enrolment status – part or fulltime;
- c. Academic progress in current semester and in the course;
- d. Special support arrangement made for those students.

5.3 The Academic Board will consider the Course Coordinator report on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background and those belonging to other subgroups and advise corrective action, if required.

6. Attendance

6.1 International students must maintain an attendance rate of 80%. Attendance is monitored and recorded by teaching and learning staff. Students whose attendance falls below 80% will be contacted by the Institute.

6.2 Record Keeping

Records of all correspondence, notifications, meeting outcomes and action plans must be kept for international students at risk of unsatisfactory course progress status and for international students who fail to meet satisfactory course progression and/or course attendance requirements.

6.3 The Institute will keep all such records for two (2) years after the international student ceases to be

a student of the Institute.

7. Graduation

7.1 Eligibility to Graduate

- a. A student is eligible to graduate and receive a qualification testamur if:
 - i. they meet all course requirements;
 - ii. they have no outstanding fees;
 - iii. there are no current suspension, exclusion or penalty on the student's record; and
 - iv. they have not already graduated from that course.
- b. Students who have outstanding fees, or under disciplinary action or penalty are not eligible to graduate until their debts are cleared or the disciplinary action is resolved, or penalty served.
- c. Students who are enrolled in a course but have completed the requirements of a nested award within that course are not eligible for the award of the nested qualification unless they withdraw from the course in which they are enrolled. Following the withdrawal, the student will be eligible to graduate with the highest nested qualification for which they have completed all course requirements.
- d. The Institute will also recognise outstanding academic achievement by conferring the Institute medals, Award with Distinction and Awards for excellence upon graduating.

7.2 Provision of Documentation

- a. Students will have access to an interim academic transcript at the end of each study period stating their grades for each unit of study for which they are enrolled, provided all relevant fees are paid.
 - b. A testamur, final academic transcript and completion letter will be issued at the end of the course to all students who have successfully completed the requirements for the award in which they are enrolled once the award is conferred.
 - c. A testamur, final academic transcript and completion letter are provided free of charge. A fee will apply for any additional requests for a testamur and final academic transcript.
 - d. The Institute will maintain a Register of all testamurs issued to students with appropriate information allowing issued Certification documentation to be traceable and verifiable.

7.3 Conferring of Awards

- a. All results will be reviewed by the Dean and the Academic Manager to ensure the student has met all course requirements. Upon review, the Dean and the Academic Manager will confirm the graduands list can be referred to the Academic Board.
- b. The Academic Board will confirm and recommend the graduands list for approval to the Governing Council.
- c. The Governing Council will provide final approval of the graduands before a testamur or final academic transcript can be issued.

7.4 Format and Required Information on the Documentation

- a. All Institution certification documents will comply with regulatory requirements and associated standards, including but not limited to the AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy and the Higher Education Standards Framework 2015 Standard 1.5 (Qualifications and Certification).
- b. Certification documentation will be printed on official stationery, appropriate to the document type. The testamur will have a foiled silver Institution logo as a measure to prevent the forging of the document. Each testamur will have a unique identification number.

7.5 Revoking an award

The Institute reserves the right to revoke any award conferred if:

- a. An administrative error has resulted in the conferral of an award for which the student was not eligible.
- b. A penalty of revoking an award has been applied to a student under the Academic Integrity Policy.

7.6 Graduation Attendance

- a. Students who have been confirmed as having completed the requirement of an Award course and who wish to attend a graduation ceremony must submit their request to attend the prescribed date of the ceremony.
- b. The Institute may limit the number of people who can accompany a graduate to the graduation ceremony.
- c. The Dean is responsible for the graduation ceremony and all communication with students about the graduation ceremony.

7.7 Upon conferral of an Award, the students will become graduates of the Institute and become eligible to join the Institute's Alumni Network.

8. Appeals

8.1 A student may appeal against a decision made under this Policy. The grounds for appeal are that the decision is inconsistent with this Policy.

8.2 Appeals must be made in writing and lodged with the Dean within ten (10) working days of the student receiving written notification of the decision.

8.3 The Dean will respond in writing to the appeal within ten (10) working days of receipt of the appeal and will confirm or vary the decision.

8.4 All decisions of the Dean regarding appeals will be presented to the Teaching and Learning Committee.

8.5 Students who remain dissatisfied with the outcome of their appeal may enact the Institute's grievance handling procedures as per the *Student Grievance Management Policy*.