

# Course Progress and Completion Within Expected Duration of Study Policy

## Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

### Purpose

(1) This Policy establishes principles and processes to ensure compliance for international onshore students with the requirements of the [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000](#) and Standards 8, 9 and 10 of the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#) (the National Code 2018). It seeks to ensure that international onshore students complete their studies within the expected duration specified in their Confirmation of Enrolment (COE), and that timely intervention strategies are implemented for students identified as being at risk of not making satisfactory course progress.

### Scope

(2) This Policy applies to international onshore students.

## Section 2 - Definitions

(3) For the purposes of this policy:

- a. Compassionate or Compelling Circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the student and which have an impact upon the student's course progress or wellbeing. These can include but are not limited to:
  - i. the student has failed occasional units throughout a course without warranting activation of an intervention strategy.
  - ii. where a registered provider is unable to offer a pre-requisite unit; or
  - iii. a traumatic experience which could include involvement in, or witnessing a serious accident; or witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime; or
  - iv. major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel when this has impacted on the student's studies;
  - v. bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents;
  - vi. serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend class;
- b. Compulsory Teaching Period is:
  - i. for students studying in Terms, Terms 1, 2, 3, and 4.
  - ii. any study period where a compulsory practical, research or project-based unit is scheduled; and
  - iii. Term 5, for students commencing at the University in Term 5.
- c. Confirmation of Enrolment (COE) is a paper copy, sent by the University to an applicant for a student visa, of an electronic confirmation of enrolment relating to the applicant.
- d. Electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCOE) – in relation to an application for a student visa, means a document, provided electronically, which is issued by the registered provider to intending overseas students and which must accompany their application for a student visa. It confirms the overseas student's eligibility to

enrol in the particular course of the registered provider.

- e. Full Time Load is two units (24 credit points), or equivalent per Term;
- f. National Code 2018 is the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#).
- g. Online Learning is study in which the teacher and student communicate through electronic technologies for the unit. For the purpose of the [National Code 2018](#), permissible Online Learning does not include study where the student is resident in his or her home country or another country and undertaking a unit of study with a registered provider which is located in Australia.
- h. Registered Course – a course of education or training provided by an institution (SCU) body or person that is a registered provider of the course in that State or Territory, for the [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000](#) and is registered on the [Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students \(CRICOS\)](#).

## Section 3 - Policy Statement

(4) This policy aims to ensure that the University's framework for monitoring course progress and the procedures used to ensure that international onshore students complete their studies within the expected duration specified in their Confirmation of Enrolment (COE) are compliant with the requirements of Standard 8 and 9 of the [National Code 2018](#). This policy recognises that the University must only grant an extension to the duration of a student's study in the limited circumstances listed in Standard 8 of the [National Code 2018](#).

### Part A - Completing Studies within the Expected Duration

#### Maintaining Enrolment Load for Visa Compliance

(5) International onshore students must enrol in:

- a. at least one face-to-face unit in each Compulsory Teaching Period; and
- b. an enrolment load of eight units (equivalent to 96 credit points) in an academic year (pro rata); and
- c. any scheduled compulsory practical, research or project-based units in accordance with the course progression requirements; and
- d. sufficient units in each teaching period to ensure that the total number of units required to complete the course will be completed within the expected duration.

(6) International onshore students who wish to vary their enrolment must apply and meet conditions as set out in [Enrolment Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Procedures – International Students](#).

#### Failure to Enrol in a Full Time Load

(7) If a student fails to enrol in at least one face-to-face unit in any Compulsory Teaching Period, they may be deemed to have notified the University of their cessation of studies, as set out in Part C of the [Enrolment Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Procedures – International Students](#). This will be reported on PRISMS and their CoE will be cancelled, which may result in their visa being cancelled.

(8) If it is determined that a student has not enrolled in sufficient units to complete their course within the expected duration, an International Student Adviser (ISA) will notify the student in writing that they must increase their unit enrolment in a future teaching period.

(9) Failure to enrol in increased load as directed under clause (8) will be grounds for refusal by the University to extend course duration through the issuing of a new COE.

## **Increased Load to Account for Failed Units**

(10) Students must make up for failed units by proportionally increasing their enrolment load in future non-compulsory teaching periods at the University or by cross-institutional study.

## **Extensions of Course Duration**

(11) Subject to clause (13), international onshore students must complete their studies within the expected duration specified in their Confirmation of Enrolment (COE).

(12) Extensions to a student's course duration through the issuing of a new COE are only permitted in the following limited circumstances:

- a. as the result of:
  - i. Compassionate or Compelling circumstances; or
  - ii. a student complying with the University's intervention strategy for students identified as at risk of not making satisfactory course progress in accordance with Part C - of this Policy.
  - iii. An approved deferral or suspension, in accordance with the [Enrolment Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Procedures – International Students](#).

(13) A Confirmation of Enrolment (COE) Extension Request must be received by the Manager, International Student Support Services, or authorised nominee, 20 working days prior to the end date of the current COE.

(14) The University is under no obligation to consider issuing a student a new COE unless the student has clearly requested such an extension in writing to the Manager, International Student Support Services.

(15) The University may request further information from the student.

(16) Where the University approves a COE Extension Request, the Manager, International Student Support Services, or authorised nominee, will notify the student, create the new COE in Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) and provide a copy to the student.

(17) The University will advise international onshore students to contact the [Department of Home Affairs](#) to seek advice on any potential impacts on their visa, including the need to obtain a new visa.

(18) Where the University refuses a COE Extension Request, the Manager, International Student Support Services, or authorised nominee, will provide written advice to the student of the grounds for the refusal, and notify the student of the right to appeal and how to activate the appeals process.

## **Online or Distance Learning Enrolment**

(19) An international onshore student cannot study more than one third of their total course by Online Learning and in every Compulsory Teaching Period there must be at least one unit that is not delivered by Online Learning.

(20) The limit to Online Learning applies only to onshore student visa holders. If a student returns to their home country and their COE is cancelled then they can enrol in Online Learning units.

(21) Units studied Online in non-compulsory teaching periods are counted for the purposes of the "one-third" limit (clause (20)).

(22) If a student is in the final study period of a course, with only one subject to complete the course, the student may study this unit via Online Learning.

(23) International onshore students must enrol in at least one face-to-face unit in any compulsory teaching periods.

## Accelerated Progress

(24) Students who complete their studies early as a result of overload enrolment or units studied in non-compulsory study periods will be reported to [Department of Home Affairs](#) through PRISMS as having completed their studies, within 30 working days after the release of final grades.

## Part B - Monitoring Course Progress

(25) As per Standard 8 of the [National Code 2018](#), the University will systematically monitor student's course progress, and proactively notify and counsel international onshore students who are at risk of failing to meet their course progress requirements. Refer to [Course Progress and Completion within Expected Duration of Study Procedures](#).

(26) Subject to Part D - of this Policy, the University will report international onshore students, under section 19 of the [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000](#), who have breached their course progress requirements. Students will be made aware, by the Southern Cross Global, of the consequences they face if they do not maintain satisfactory course progress and what effect this may have on their student visa.

## Part C - Managing Unsatisfactory Course Progress

(27) [Rule 2](#) and [Rule 3](#) of the University's Rules Relating to Awards shall apply to the determination of unsatisfactory course progress of international onshore students.

(28) Any student with unsatisfactory course progress must be advised:

- a. that unsatisfactory course progress in a course for three consecutive compulsory study periods could lead to the student:
  - i. being excluded from the course;
  - ii. being reported to the [Department of Home Affairs](#);
  - iii. having their student visa cancelled, depending on the outcome of the appeals process; and
- b. where appropriate, whether the course in which they are enrolled remains suitable;
- c. of any opportunities to be reassessed in assessment tasks failed;
- d. of resources available to assist the student to improve performance; and
- e. that they may lodge an appeal, as outlined in [Rules Relating to Awards Rule 2 Section 10](#), against any determination made by the University relating to their unsatisfactory course progress, and that such appeals must be received by the University within 20 working days from the date of the University's official notification of unsatisfactory performance to the student.

(29) An intervention strategy must be designed, documented and activated for each student assessed as at risk of unsatisfactory course progress in accordance with clause (31) - (34).

## Intervention Strategies

(30) A student who has failed one unit in any study period will be:

- a. requested to seek additional assistance in order to improve academic performance. This request will be in the form of an email notification and a warning letter; and
- b. required to make up for failed units in accordance with clause (11).

(31) The University must implement an intervention strategy for any international onshore student who in any study period has:

- a. failed (or deemed not yet competent in) 50% or more of the units attempted in any study period; or
- b. failed the same unit twice (or deemed not yet competent in that unit); or
- c. obtained an Absent Fail grade in one or more units.

(32) The Intervention Strategy must be:

- a. activated within the first two weeks of the following teaching period.
- b. documented in writing with evidence of the intervention measures implemented recorded in each student's file.

(33) For the purposes of clause (32)a, an intervention strategy will be deemed 'activated' when a written notification is sent to the student and:

- a. personal contact with the student has been undertaken by a suitably authorised staff member; or
- b. where personal contact is not reasonably possible, the student is notified by other reasonable means.

## Part D - Reporting

### Reporting in Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) for Unsatisfactory Course Progress.

(34) Subject to clause (36), an international onshore student may only be reported for Unsatisfactory Course Progress on PRISMS after:

- a. 20 working days has elapsed since the student was informed in writing of the intention to report and the grounds that form the basis for reporting; and
- b. the student was informed in writing of the right to appeal and given details of how to activate the appeals process.

(35) The suspension or cancellation could take effect before the internal appeals process is completed, if the overseas student's health or wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, is likely to be at risk.

(36) Where the allegation of Unsatisfactory Course Progress is the subject of an appeal, an international onshore student may only be reported for Unsatisfactory Course Progress on PRISMS after:

- a. the appeals process, including any external appeal, has been finalised or foregone by the student; and
- b. the student remained enrolled during the appeals process.

(37) If a student's enrolment is deferred, suspended or cancelled for unsatisfactory course progress, the student will be advised to seek advice from the [Department of Home Affairs](#) on the potential impact to their student visa.

(38) When reporting a student on PRISMS, all SCU staff must follow the procedures contained in the PRISMS User Guide.

## Section 4 - Procedures

(39) See the [Course Progress and Completion Within Expected Duration of Study Procedures](#).

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	31st October 2024
<b>Review Date</b>	31st October 2027
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Director, Governance Services
<b>Approval Date</b>	30th October 2024
<b>Expiry Date</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Brendon Nelson Vice President (Students) and Registrar
<b>Head of Work Unit</b>	Chithira Johnson Director, Student Support
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Jacky Zhang Manager, International Student Support Services <hr/> Student Care and Support