Student Academic Experience Policy

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

Purpose

(1) This Policy:

   a. describes how the University ensures a high quality, engaging and supportive academic experience for students over the lifecycle of their study, from enrolment to completion; and
   b. supports compliance with the [Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021](#) and the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (National Code) 2018](#).

Scope

(2) This Policy applies to:

   a. all staff employed by the University; and
   b. all students admitted to an award course or pathway program (including ELICOS) offered by the University, including all modes of study and campuses, regardless of location, as well as those offered with educational partners.

Section 2 - Definitions

(3) See [Definitions (Academic) Policy](#).

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(4) The University recognises that many students combine study with numerous other commitments and that students require the appropriate and effective learning resources, learning environments and support to achieve their academic goals.

(5) The University is committed to delivering a distinctive and positive student experience while supporting students to progress and succeed in their studies by upholding the following principles:

   a. Principle 1: Providing a safe and supportive learning environment (Threshold Standards 2.1 and 2.3);
   b. Principle 2: Providing the necessary information to ensure students can appropriately engage in their studies (Threshold Standards 1.3 and 7.2);
   c. Principle 3: Supporting students' progress and learning during their study (Threshold Standards 1.3 and 3.3), including:
      i. providing equitable opportunities for students to engage and succeed, regardless of their background (Threshold Standard 2.2); and
      ii. monitoring and evaluating student academic support programs to ensure they maintain relevance and

This document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to the Southern Cross University Policy Library for the latest version.

Page 1 of 9

meet intended impact and engagement objectives;

    d. Principle 4: Providing opportunities for students to participate in academic life within the University (Threshold Standards 2.4, 5.3 and 6.3)and to engage in academic experiences outside the University (Threshold Standard 5.4); and

    e. Principle 5: Recognising student achievement.

Principle 1: The University provides a learning environment that enables students to succeed in their studies.

(6) Students are provided with access to extensive physical and virtual learning resources and facilities that are appropriate to their chosen mode of study and sufficient to enable them to succeed in their course of study.

(7) Where learning resources are part of an electronic learning management system, all students have timely access to the system and training is available to use the system.

(8) Access to learning resources does not present unexpected barriers, costs or technology requirements for students, including for students with additional support requirements and those who study online.

(9) The University promotes and fosters a safe and supportive learning environment by:

    a. advising students and staff on actions they can take to enhance safety and security in accordance with the [Work Health Safety Policy](#);

    b. providing resources to assist students and staff to create and maintain safe and supporting learning environments; and

    c. establishing expectations for staff and students to create and maintain safe and supportive learning environments as set out in the [Assessment, Teaching and Learning Policy](#).

(10) The University assists students to become independent and self-regulated learners, who can work both collaboratively and independently to succeed in their studies, through:

    a. teaching and assessment practices that support self-regulated learning, as set out in the [Assessment, Teaching and Learning Policy](#); and

    b. provision of an extensive range of support services (see [Student Life and Support](#)) including:

        i. learning support services;

        ii. personal support services; and

        iii. social and cultural support services.

(11) Students enrolled in units that require completion of a substantial independent project (including, but not limited to, a research project) are provided with appropriate supervision and mentorship to guide their learning.

(12) Students enrolled in units that require completion of a substantial research project are additionally provided with appropriate supervision and mentorship to guide their research and ensure compliance with the [Research Quality, Standards and Integrity Policy](#).

(13) Students are only permitted to undertake a research project on a particular topic if the requirements set out in clauses (11) and (12), and other relevant requirements of the [Research Quality, Standards and Integrity Policy](#), can be satisfied.

(14) If circumstances change after a student has commenced their research project such that clause (13) is no longer satisfied, the University will make appropriate arrangements to support the student to continue their studies by either:

This document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to the Southern Cross University Policy Library for the latest version.

Page 2 of 9

a. providing alternative supervision and support arrangements to allow the student to continue with their existing project; or if this is not possible

b. assisting the student to develop a new project that can be supported appropriately, provided the student is not penalised or otherwise disadvantaged by the change; or if this is not possible

c. assisting the student to transfer to another University to complete their studies; or if this is not possible

d. withdrawing the student from their course and arranging appropriate reimbursement or remission of fees.

(15) The Course Coordinator is responsible for establishing adequate processes to:

a. ensure that adequate supervision arrangements are maintained

b. monitor the supervisor-student relationship; and

c. resolve any disputes between students and supervisors to support the welfare of both staff and students;

for any significant independent projects undertaken in a course.

Principle 2: The University provides students with all necessary information to ensure they can appropriately engage in their studies.

(16) Students are comprehensively informed about all matters that affect their studies or broader academic experience:

a. in a timely manner;

b. respectfully;

c. in plain English and, where relevant, accompanied by explanations of any technical or specialised terms; and

d. in a culturally and age appropriate manner.

(17) Prior to accepting an offer to study at the University, students are provided with information to assist in planning for and participating in their studies, including:

a. Inherent Requirements for successful completion of a course, where applicable;

b. orientation and induction arrangements;

c. how, where and when courses and units are delivered;

d. technical requirements for access to technology systems, online learning activities, and learning resources;

e. work integrated learning requirements, including any compulsory online or work-based training or placements, or collaborative research training arrangements;

f. the typical time commitment required;

g. course fees and other direct costs associated with their studies; and

h. opportunities to participate in decision making and student representation.

(18) The University provides orientation programs to ensure new students are familiar with:

a. support services available to help them adjust to study;

b. study assistance programs;

c. emergency and health services;

d. facilities and resources that are available to them;

e. complaints and appeals processes;

f. requirements for course attendance and progress; and

g. support services available to assist them with general or personal circumstances that may adversely impact their study.

(19) Additionally, international students are provided with information regarding:

    a. life in Australia, including information on employment rights and conditions;

    b. how to access legal services and to resolve workplace issues; and

    c. English language programs.

(20) Current and prospective students are provided with clear and timely information about available courses, unit clusters and units via the University's public website, including:

    a. course and unit names and codes;

    b. the Faculty or College owner of each course, unit cluster or unit;

    c. requirements for admission or enrolment, including any requisites or restrictions;

    d. how, where and when courses, unit clusters and units are delivered;

    e. the recommended order in which students enrol in units to progress through their studies.

    f. the aim, description and broad content of each course, unit cluster or unit;

    g. details of any professional accreditation requirements or arrangements;

    h. details of any compulsory work integrated learning requirements;

    i. learning outcomes and relationship with the University's Graduate Attributes for each course, unit cluster or unit;

    j. requirements for successful completion of each course or unit, including the grading basis and type and number of assessment tasks for each unit offering and location; and

    k. required learning resources and equipment.

(21) No less than one week before each study period, students are provided with accurate information about the broad content and requirements for success for each unit in which a student is enrolled through the learning management system, including:

    a. professional accreditation requirements (if applicable);

    b. requirements for any work integrated learning (if applicable);

    c. assessment details;

    d. any field trips, laboratory sessions or residential workshops; and

    e. the name and contact details of the Unit Assessor.

(22) Students are provided with information about how to access academic or other support services described in clause (10).

Principle 3: The University recognises the diversity of our students and provides support to ensure all students can progress through their studies in a timely manner and achieve to their full potential.

(23) The University:

    a. welcomes students from diverse backgrounds;

    b. fosters a safe and inclusive culture through implementation of policies, practices and approaches to teaching and learning that are designed to respect and respond to diverse perspectives; and

    c. ensures equitable opportunities for academic success regardless of a student's background.

(24) The Rules Relating to Awards set out clear, appropriate and evidence-based criteria for admission to each award course along with rigorous processes for assessing the eligibility of students for admission which ensure that all

This document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to the Southern Cross University Policy Library for the latest version.

Page 4 of 9

student have:

   a. the academic preparation needed to participate;
   b. the proficiency in English needed to participate;
   c. any other required skills and qualities considered necessary; and
   d. no known limitations that would be expected to impede their progression and completion.

(25) The University ensures that the provisions of clause (24) are met by regularly and systematically reviewing the appropriateness of admission requirements for each course with regard to the progress and performance of student cohorts admitted under different criteria or pathways.

(26) Curriculum design is inclusive, as set out in the Curriculum Policy, with courses and units including content and learning experiences that are relevant to, and meet the learning needs of, the University's student profile.

(27) The offerings of units will be set to ensure that students have a pathway to progress through their studies in a manner that is appropriate for their commencement date, study pattern (full-time or part-time) and location of course admission, and allows them to complete their studies in the advertised minimum course duration, except under exceptional circumstances.

(28) When a new course or unit is offered Online, students may still be required to attend compulsory activities at other locations, provided:

   a. the activities are essential to meet the unit or course learning outcomes, or the requirements of any relevant external accrediting bodies (as determined by the Academic Board);
   b. the activities cannot be reasonably delivered in an online only format, and
   c. the attendance requirements are clearly communicated to students prior to enrolment in the course or unit.

(29) The University provides learning arrangements to support learning and progress by students with a wide range of different learning needs and circumstances through:

   a. designing the curriculum in the manner set out in the Curriculum Policy to:
       i. maximise opportunities for students to enter and exit at different stages, such as through use of nested courses and opportunities for recognition of prior learning;
       ii. provide a choice of minors, majors or specialisations, and a choice of elective units, where possible; and
       iii. minimise requirements for study of units in a particular order.
   b. providing special consideration in assessment to students for:
       i. health issues (including impacts of religious fasting);
       ii. compassionate circumstances;
       iii. religious observances or celebrations;
       iv. serious unforeseen personal events;
       v. selection in State, national or international sporting or performance events;
       vi. rendering genuine and unforeseen emergency service in a professional or voluntary capacity; or
       vii. rendering any service (including undertaking training) in the Defence Reserves.
   c. providing specific arrangements to support students with additional requirements (including but not limited to students with disability), as set out in the Support for Students with Additional Requirements Schedule, to the extent that such arrangements:
       i. are required by legislation;
       ii. are consistent with Inherent Requirements for a course, where applicable;

iii. do not compromise academic standards and intellectual integrity;

iv. do not unfairly disadvantage other students;

v. are reasonably practicable; and

vi. within the University's direct control.

(30) The University proactively identifies and attempts to support students who are not engaging or progressing by:

a. ensuring that each unit includes an early assessment or participation task that provides formative feedback on academic progress to assist students to appropriately self-manage their level of participation and engagement, consistent with the Assessment, Teaching and Learning Policy and Assessment Procedures;

b. identifying students whose engagement or performance during the study period is poor and offering them appropriate support, as set out in the Student Academic Engagement and Progress Procedures; and

c. identifying students who are at risk of unsatisfactory academic progress at the end of each study period and providing them with appropriate specific support, as set out in the Rules Relating to Awards – Rule 2 – Coursework Awards – General Provisions and the Student Academic Engagement and Progress Procedures.

(31) Trends in participation, progress, and completion by identified student cohorts are monitored, and this information is used to recommend actions for improvement of teaching, learning and support strategies for those cohorts.

Principle 4: Students are provided with opportunities for academic experiences within and outside the University in ways that value and respect them as partners in the learning process, as members of the University's academic community, and as ambassadors to the wider world.

(32) The University maintains a constructive and mutually respectful relationship with its students in accordance with the Student Rights and Responsibilities Charter.

(33) The University regularly and systematically solicits student feedback on their educational experiences using formal surveys, which is collected, considered and acted upon ethically and as described in the Academic Quality, Standards and Integrity Policy.

(34) Students are encouraged and supported to participate in decision-making and information-gathering forums, such as:

a. Governance committees, such as Academic Board and its sub-committees;

b. Student Associations;

c. Leadership groups; and

d. Focus groups.

(35) Student members of formal governance committees are normally supported with a committee-specific orientation session and where possible, offered a fellow-member as a mentor.

(36) In addition to governance committees, students may be invited to join leadership or focus groups or stand for election to the Student Representation Committee.

(37) All new, and significant amendments to, Rules and Policies that relate to the student academic experience will request and consider representative feedback from students before being presented for approval.

(38) Students have access to complaints, review and appeal processes that deliver fair, consistent and timely resolution of formal complaints and appeals against academic and administrative decisions without reprisal and

This document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to the Southern Cross University Policy Library for the latest version.

Page 6 of 9

without charge or at reasonable cost to students, as set out in the [Academic Appeals Procedures](#) and [Complaints Policy – Students and Members of the Public](#).

(39) The University's curriculum is designed to provide students with academic experiences that develop the University's Graduate Attributes, as set out the [Curriculum Policy](#).

(40) The University's curriculum is designed to include, where appropriate, opportunities for academic experiences outside the university through Work Integrated Learning, as described in Design Principle 6 of the [Curriculum Policy](#).

(41) In some courses, especially when required for professional accreditation or professional practice, participation in Work Integrated Learning may be a mandatory requirement for successful completion of the course.

(42) When students are required to undertake Work Integrated Learning activities, the University will ensure that appropriate support is provided to assure learning and manage the conduct, performance, wellbeing and safety of students and external parties involved in the activities, as set out in the Work Integrated Learning Procedures.

(43) Significant changes to the taught curriculum will be accompanied by a transition plan for all students who may be affected that identifies, evaluates and attempts to minimise impacts of the proposed changes on students with respect to the principles set out in this policy.

(44) The relevant approver, as set out in the [Course and Unit Approval Authorities](#), may decline to approve proposed significant changes to the taught curriculum on the basis that a suitable transition plan has not been provided or that the transition plan fails to ensure the principles set out in this policy are adequately met.

Principle 5: Student achievements are appropriately recognised and celebrated.

(45) The University recognises student achievement by awarding (and where possible publicly acknowledging and celebrating):

a. annual Student Excellence Awards, which recognise students who have distinguished themselves in areas such as leadership, volunteering, sport or community engagement; and
b. commendations, prizes and medals for academic performance.

(46) Faculty Boards are responsible for setting the criteria for academic prizes as detailed in the [Prizes and Medals Policy](#).

(47) Academic Board determines the eligibility and criteria for awarding the University Medal and Chancellor's Medal as detailed in the [Prizes and Medals Policy](#) and [Rules Relating to Awards – Rule 10 – Awards](#).

(48) Where possible, medal recipients are publicly acknowledged and celebrated at graduation ceremonies.

(49) Students who successfully complete an award course of the University will be eligible to receive a testamur, an Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (AHEGS), and a copy of their transcript as set out in [Rules Relating to Awards – Rule 10 – Awards](#) and the [Conferral of Awards and Testamur Integrity Procedures](#), except if the student has been imposed with sanctions as set out in the [Rules – Fees, Charges and Sanctions](#).

(50) Students are entitled to complete award courses based on the requirements that were current at the time they first enrolled in the course, and to receive an award bearing the title of the course at the time they first enrolled in the course, as set out in [Rules Relating to Awards – Rule 10 – Awards](#).

(51) Students who successfully complete a non-award course of the University will be eligible to receive:

a. a certificate of attainment, if successful completion of the course is dependent on successful completion of one

or more assessment tasks to a satisfactory standard; or

b. a certificate of participation, if successful completion of the course is based solely on participation in the course.

Section 4 - Associated Policies

(52) The following policies support the University's aim to deliver a high-quality academic experience to students:

a. [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
b. [Course Progress and Completion within Expected Duration of Study Policy](#) and [Procedures](#)
c. [Enrolment, Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Procedures - International Students](#)
d. [Fitness for Study Policy](#)
e. [Higher Degree Research Fitness to Study Policy](#)
f. [Prizes and Medals Policy](#)

g. [Rules Relating to Awards - Rule 2 - Coursework Awards - General Provisions](#)
h. [Rules Relating to Awards - Rule 3 - Coursework Awards - Student Assessment and Examinations](#)
i. [Student Critical Incident Management Policy](#)
j. [Student Rights and Responsibilities Charter](#)
k. [Work Integrated Learning Guidelines](#)

(53) Schedule:

a. [Support for Students with Additional Requirements Schedule](#)

(54) Procedures:

a. [Support for Students with Additional Requirements - Procedures](#)
b. [Work Integrated Learning Procedures](#)

(55) Procedures Under Development

a. Proposed – Student Academic Engagement and Progress Procedures - new Procedures to describe the mechanisms by which we identify and attempt to engage with students at-risk
b. Proposed – Academic Appeals Procedures - to replace the existing [Academic Board Appeals Committee's Procedures](#).

This document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to the Southern Cross University Policy Library for the latest version.

Page 8 of 9

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	5th March 2026
Review Date	20th December 2026
Approval Authority	Director, Governance Services
Approval Date	5th March 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Brendon Nelson Vice President (Students) and Registrar
Head of Work Unit	Brendon Nelson Vice President (Students) and Registrar
Enquiries Contact	Brendon Nelson Vice President (Students) and Registrar