

TAFE NSW HIGHER EDUCATION

STUDENT PROGRESSION AND EXCLUSION PROCEDURE

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1. Document history and details

Version 6: 5 December 2024

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2. Introduction

- 2.1 This procedure outlines the TAFE NSW Higher Education rules for meeting student support needs, course progression requirements, managing students at risk, and student exclusion related to unsatisfactory academic progress.
- 2.2 TAFE NSW Higher Education requires that academic progress of all students is monitored. Students who are determined to be 'at risk' will be provided with advice and assistance to support successful course completion.

3. Audience and applicability

3.1 This procedure applies to:

- all TAFE NSW Higher Education staff responsible for the management of students enrolled in higher education courses including academic, counselling and student administration staff; and
- all students enrolled in TAFE NSW Higher Education courses.

4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Academic staff	Dean of Higher Education, Course Coordinators, Teachers
Course Coordinator	The academic manager of a TAFE NSW Higher Education course, who has overall responsibility for course and student management at the delivering campus.
CRICOS	Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students
Dean of Higher Education	Responsible for overseeing and reporting to the Higher Education Academic Council on a range of TAFE NSW Higher Education academic matters, student management, course implementation and professional development of staff.
Deferment	The approved temporary postponement of commencement of study.
Higher Education Academic Council	Responsible for academic governance of TAFE NSW Higher Education to allow educational objectives to be achieved.
Interruption of Studies	The approved temporary postponement of study by an enrolled student.
Intervention strategy	Strategy negotiated between the counsellor and the student to assist the student to meet minimum academic standards.
Senior Manager, Higher Education Quality	Overall responsibility for TAFE NSW Higher Education programs and point of contact between TAFE NSW and TEQSA.
Student Issues Register	A record maintained by the Course Coordinator of all students deemed to be at academic risk.
TAFE NSW Higher Education	Trading name for the Technical and Further Education Commission which is the higher education provider registered with TEQSA.

5. Student Support Services

- 5.1 TAFE NSW is committed to supporting students to reach their academic goals. To this end, TAFE NSW provides a variety of culturally appropriate academic and personal support services in a timely manner.
- 5.2 Students are made aware of the availability of academic and personal support services that may assist them with issues that may affect their ability to complete their studies both prior to and after enrolment.
- 5.3 All students, including those who request access to support services prior to the census date, are reminded that the census date is the last date they can withdraw without incurring financial or academic penalty.
- 5.4 The range of academic and personal support services available to all TAFE NSW students and prospective students and how to access them is published on the TAFE NSW website and in the annual TAFE NSW Student Guide together with information on how to access them. This information is also communicated to students during orientation sessions held each teaching period.

6. Types of Support Services

- 6.1 Support services available to prospective students and students include:
 - course selection and career pathways
 - learning support
 - study management skills
 - library services
 - support for aboriginal students
 - careers counselling
 - personal counselling
 - mental health and wellbeing support
 - support during personal issues affecting studies
 - disability services
 - international student support
 - multicultural support
 - support to access specialist services including assistance for issues relating to domestic violence, drug and alcohol matters, accommodation, and government support agencies.

7. Early Identification & Intervention Strategy

- 7.1 Teachers will identify potentially at-risk students during the first four weeks of subject delivery.
- 7.2 Identification of potentially at-risk students is based on the student:
 - previously failing to successfully complete a unit of study in their course
 - has not engaged with the support services previously offered to them
 - needs literacy and numeracy support
 - has minimal class attendance
 - has not submitted early assessment tasks

- has performed poorly in early assessment tasks
- has not logged into or engaged with the Learning Management System (Moodle)
- has informed a TAFE NSW staff member that non-academic/personal issues may put them at risk of not successfully completing their unit of study.

7.3 All students identified as potentially at-risk, will be contacted by the Course Coordinator no later than Week 6 in the current semester to be offered additional support.

7.4 It is the student's responsibility to ensure they participate in any additional support strategies recommended.

8. Academic progress

8.1 Students are required to attain minimum academic standards to be deemed to be maintaining satisfactory academic progress in a course of study.

8.2 Students do not meet minimum academic standards in a course if they:

- are at risk of not successfully completing their unit(s) of study
- demonstrate low levels of engagement in the unit(s) of study, for example, the student has not attended any classes or engaged with the unit's content online;
- fail any given unit of study more than once; and/or
- fail two or more subjects attempted in a semester.

8.3 Each Course Coordinator monitors the academic performance of each student against the minimum academic standards throughout the semester and at the end of each semester.

9. Students deemed at academic risk

9.1 A student not meeting minimum academic standards, as described in Section 8.2 above, or who is otherwise identified as experiencing academic difficulties, is deemed to be a student at academic risk.

9.2 A record of all students deemed to be at academic risk must be maintained by the Course Coordinator in the Student Issues Register.

9.3 The Course Coordinator will contact the student at risk, in writing, to arrange an academic counselling session.

9.4 The purpose of an academic counselling session is to determine an appropriate intervention strategy such as a Student at Risk Intervention Plan. The Student at Risk Intervention Plan will be negotiated between the Course Coordinator, the student and where appropriate a TAFE NSW Counsellor.

9.5 The Student at Risk Intervention Plan must be signed by the student and a copy of the document is to be saved in the student's record in the Student Management System.

9.6 The Student at Risk Intervention Plan may include requiring the student to:

- attend academic skills programs;
- attend tutorial or study groups;
- receive individual case management;
- attend academic or personal counselling;
- have their study load reduced;
- receive reasonable adjustment or special consideration for an assessment event;

- receive assistance with personal issues which are influencing progress;
- receive mentoring; or
- a combination of the above.

9.7 At risk students may have conditions placed on their enrolment.

9.8 At risk students are made aware in writing of the availability of support processes and services at the various points at which they are identified to be at risk.

9.9 Student participation and progress in undertaking the Student at Risk Intervention Plan must be documented in the Student Issues Register and will be monitored, reviewed, and adjusted as needed by the relevant academic and/or support staff providing the support or service.

9.10 The outcomes of the intervention strategy will be recorded in the Student Issues Register and reported by the Course Coordinator to the Dean of Higher Education.

9.11 The flowchart at Appendix A summarises the process to manage students at academic risk.

10. Failing a prerequisite subject

10.1 A student who has not successfully completed a required prerequisite subject for progression to a subsequent subject may not be enrolled in the subsequent subject.

10.2 Where a student believes their course progress may be adversely affected by the provisions of Section 10.1, the student may seek a review of this rule by writing to the Dean of Higher Education.

10.3 In determining whether the student is permitted to progress, the Dean of Higher Education will assess the student's academic record. The Dean may allow the student to repeat the prerequisite subject concurrently with the subject that it is a prerequisite for, based on advice from the Course Coordinator and the Dean's assessment as to whether the student may reasonably be expected to be successful.

11. Students who continue to fail to meet minimum academic standards

11.1 A student who fails to meet minimum academic standards in the next study period after an intervention strategy has been provided, will be advised by the Course Coordinator in writing warning them that their enrolment may be terminated.

11.2 The student is required to provide a written response to the Course Coordinator outlining reasons why they should be permitted to continue enrolment in the course. The student must submit the response within two weeks of the date of the notification from the Course Coordinator.

11.3 A student who does not submit a written response by the due date will be advised that their enrolment will be terminated.

11.4 On receipt of the student's response, the Course Coordinator may:

- permit the student to continue with or without specific conditions; or
- recommend to the Dean of Higher Education termination of the student's enrolment.

11.5 In determining whether the student is permitted to continue enrolment in the course, consideration should be given to:

- any circumstances that may have negatively affected the student's academic performance; and
- the student's compliance and engagement with the Student at Risk Intervention Plan developed for the student.

- 11.6 An intervention strategy must be activated for a student who is permitted to continue their enrolment in the course, as described in Section 7.
- 11.7 A student who is permitted to continue their enrolment in the course, and who again fails to attain the minimum academic standards or breaches the conditions will have their enrolment terminated due to unsatisfactory academic progress.
- 11.8 Any decision to terminate the student's enrolment will be communicated in writing to the student by the Dean of Higher Education.
- 11.9 A student who is advised that their enrolment will be terminated will be informed of their right to appeal the decision.
- 11.10 If the student accesses the appeals processes, then their enrolment must be maintained while the appeals process is in progress.
- 11.11 Students who fail to turn up to class, but who have not officially withdrawn using the official TAFE NSW Higher Education Withdrawal Form, and who are awarded a Fail in accordance with the Higher Education Assessment Procedure, will be subject to the provisions of the TAFE NSW Higher Education Student Progression and Exclusion Procedure, in relation to satisfactory academic progress.
- 11.12 Students who fail to turn up to class, but who have not officially withdrawn using the official TAFE NSW Higher Education Withdrawal Form, will be subject to the provisions of the TAFE NSW Higher Education Tuition Fees, Payments, FEE-HELP, Refund and Review Policy and Procedures, in relation to tuition fees, refunds, and special circumstance provisions.
- 11.13 A student who is a 'no-show' for a full semester, and who has not responded to repeated attempts at contact by the Course Coordinator will have their enrolment cancelled, and a TAFE NSW Higher Education initiated withdrawal of the student will be actioned.

12. Consequences of termination of enrolment

- 12.1 Students whose enrolment is terminated, but who wish to undertake further study, in the same or a different course, must apply to TAFE NSW Higher Education for re-admission in line with the TAFE NSW Higher Education Student Selection and Admissions Procedure. Conditions may be placed on the student's new enrolment.

13. International students

- 13.1 In accordance with the Standard 8 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (NC 2018), TAFE NSW Higher Education will:
 - (i) regularly monitor overseas students to ensure satisfactory course progress;
 - (ii) implement an intervention strategy for overseas students not making satisfactory course progress;
 - (iii) provide the overseas student a written notice of its intention to report to the Department of Home Affairs if the overseas student fails to meet the course progress requirements;
 - (iv) advise the overseas student of their right to access the TAFE NSW internal appeal within 20 working days in the written notice of intent to report;
 - (v) review overseas students internal appeal as per TAFE NSW Internal Appeals Policy and Procedure; and
 - (vi) provide details to the overseas students to access external appeal within 10 working days where the internal appeal is not in favour of the overseas student.
- 13.2 A Student at Risk Intervention Plan must be activated for international students who do not meet minimum satisfactory progress standards as per the provisions in this procedure.

- 13.3 After a Student at Risk Intervention Plan has been put in place, an international student who continues to fail to meet the minimum academic standards in a second consecutive semester must be notified in writing by the Course Coordinator that they have not achieved satisfactory academic progress and that their enrolment may be terminated. The Course Coordinator also advises the Dean of Higher Education and the International Customer Experience Lead about the student's unsatisfactory progress.
- 13.4 An international student has the right to appeal a decision to terminate their enrolment. The process is as follows:
- 13.4.1 The student must respond in writing to the Course Coordinator within two weeks of the date of the letter from the Course Coordinator giving reasons as to why their enrolment should not be terminated.
- 13.4.2 On receipt of the student's response, the Course Coordinator may:
- (i) permit the student to continue with or without specific conditions; or
 - (ii) recommend to the Dean of Higher Education termination of the student's enrolment.
- 13.5 An international student who is permitted to continue their enrolment in the course, and who again fails to attain the minimum academic standards or breaches the conditions will have their enrolment terminated due to unsatisfactory academic progress.
- 13.6 Any decision to terminate the student's enrolment will be communicated in writing to the student by the Dean of Higher Education.
- 13.7 An international student who is advised that their enrolment will be terminated will be informed of their right to appeal the decision.
- 13.8 If the international student does not respond within four weeks to the letter advising termination, the Dean of Higher Education advises the International Customer Experience Lead who will report the student for unsatisfactory progress to the relevant Commonwealth government departments with responsibility for international students.
- 13.9 If the international student does respond to the letter advising termination and the internal appeal is not upheld, the International Customer Experience Lead is advised and provided with relevant documentation. The International Customer Experience Lead advises the student about the external appeal process, including the timeframe to access this appeal.
- 13.10 If the international student does not access the external appeal process or if the external appeal is unsuccessful, then the International Customer Experience Lead will report the student for unsatisfactory progress to the relevant Commonwealth government departments with responsibility for international students and will recommend to the Dean of Higher Education termination of the student's enrolment.
- 13.11 If the student accesses the appeals processes, then their enrolment must be maintained while the appeals process is in progress.

14. Period of candidature

- 14.1 Students must meet the requirements of a course of study within a prescribed number of years from the date of first enrolment. A defined period of maximum candidature is to ensure that the qualification awarded reflects currency of knowledge and skill and relevance to professional and/or occupational outcomes.
- 14.2 The number of years permitted to complete the requirements of a course, including periods of exclusions and lapsed candidature, will be within the period prescribed in this procedure under

Section 14.3, except where a different period has been prescribed for a course and approved by the Higher Education Academic Council.

- 14.3 Subject to this procedure, a student must meet all the course requirements for an award within the period as set out in the table below:

Qualification	Maximum period for meeting completion requirements
Undergraduate Certificates	2 calendar years
Higher Education Diploma	4 calendar years
Associate Degree	6 calendar years
Bachelor Degree	10 calendar years
Graduate Certificate	3 calendar years
Graduate Diploma	4 calendar years
Masters degree	6 calendar years

- 14.4 For international students the maximum period is the duration of the course registered on CRICOS. This is the period for which a student visa is granted. Extensions beyond this period will depend on extensions of the student visa and must comply with Section 14.3 above.
- 14.5 The time elapsed will be calculated from the date that the student commenced their first semester of study.

15. Applications for extension of period of candidature

- 15.1 Students who fail to complete within the prescribed period and who can reasonably be expected to meet the course requirements within two additional semesters of study may apply for an extension of time. Each application will be considered on its merits and with reference to the student's academic performance to date.
- 15.2 Applications for an extension of time to complete the course must be made in writing to the Dean of Higher Education. The application must be submitted at least one semester prior to the expiry of the student's prescribed period of candidature. The application must include reasons for the student's inability to complete the qualification in the prescribed period of time. The decision of the Dean of Higher Education will be communicated in writing to the student within four weeks. The student will be informed of their right to appeal the decision.

16. Students who fail to complete within the time limit

- 16.1 Students who fail to complete course requirements within the prescribed number of years and additional time granted by way of extension will have their enrolment terminated.
- 16.2 The student will be advised in writing by the Course Coordinator of the decision to terminate their enrolment due to failure to complete within the prescribed time limit.
- 16.3 Students will be advised of their right to appeal within four weeks of the date shown on the letter.
- 16.4 Students who discontinue their study or fail to complete within the time limit and who have their enrolment terminated are eligible to receive a transcript of academic record listing all subjects undertaken. Where the student has met the requirements of an embedded qualification, a testamur for the embedded qualification will be issued.

17. Deferment

- 17.1 Students who have been offered a place in a TAFE NSW Higher Education course may defer commencement of their studies for a maximum of two semesters.
- 17.2 Students who wish to defer their studies must advise the Course Coordinator in writing as soon as possible and in line with the TAFE NSW Higher Education Tuition Fees, Payments, FEE-HELP, Refunds & Review Procedure.
- 17.3 The deferment only relates to the course the student has received an offer for and cannot be transferred to another TAFE NSW Higher Education course.
- 17.4 Students who wish to delay commencement of their studies for more than two semesters will be required to submit a new application for entry into the course.
- 17.5 Students returning from a deferment must advise the Course Coordinator in writing at least four weeks prior to the commencement of the semester in which they intend to commence their studies.

18. Interruption of studies

- 18.1 Students enrolled in a course, can interrupt (suspend) their studies for a period of time that will still allow them to complete course requirements within the maximum period allowed as per Section 14.3.
- 18.2 Students enrolled in a TAFE NSW Higher Education course, who wish to interrupt their studies must advise the Course Coordinator in writing as soon as possible and in line with the TAFE NSW Higher Education Tuition Fees, Payments, FEE-HELP, Refunds & Review Procedure.
- 18.3 Students returning from a period of leave must advise the Course Coordinator in writing at least four weeks prior to the commencement of the semester in which they intend to return to study.
- 18.4 Students who interrupt their studies for more than a total of two years may be required to undertake additional study to ensure currency of their learning.

19. Withdrawing from a subject or course

- 19.1 Students enrolled in a course, who wish to withdraw from a subject, multiple subjects or the course as a whole, must do so in accordance with the provisions of the TAFE NSW Higher Education Assessment Procedure.

20. Course Versions

- 20.1 From time to time TAFE NSW Higher Education will make changes to course structure and completion requirements. TAFE NSW Higher Education will work together with students to manage any required transition to a new version to ensure that no student's progress is unreasonably impacted.

21. Appeals

- 21.1 A student may appeal any decision made under this procedure. The only grounds for appeal are that the decision is inconsistent with this procedure.
- 21.2 Students wishing to appeal must follow the processes outlined in TAFE NSW Customer Complaints Policy.

22. Roles and responsibilities

- 22.1 The Dean of Higher Education and the Course Coordinator are responsible for the effective management and implementation of this procedure.
- 22.2 Academic staff are responsible for:

- the implementation of this procedure;
- monitoring student academic progress; and
- managing students at academic risk.

22.3 The Dean of Higher Education will provide a summary report on the management of students at risk and make recommendations to address any identified systematic issues for each course in the annual Course Performance Reports. Any recommendations made in the Course Performance Report will be actioned by the relevant Teaching and Learning Committee.

22.4 The Dean of Higher Education will provide an annual whole of institution progression and exclusion summary report to the Higher Education Academic Council.

22.5 This procedure does not replace or modify any other responsibilities which may arise under other higher education provider policies or under statute or any other law.

23. Related documents

TAFE NSW Assessment Policy

TAFE NSW Customer Complaints Policy

TAFE NSW Higher Education Assessment Procedure

TAFE NSW Higher Education Degree Conferral and Graduation Procedure

TAFE NSW Higher Education Progression, Exclusion and Graduation Policy

TAFE NSW Higher Education Student Consultation Policy and Procedure

TAFE NSW Higher Education Student Selection and Admissions Policy and Procedure

TAFE NSW Higher Education Tuition Fees, Payments, HELP, Refunds and Review Policy and Procedure

24. Monitoring and evaluation

This procedure will be reviewed and updated regularly in line with the TAFE NSW Higher Education Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Framework.

25. Publication of this procedure

The current version of this procedure is published on the TAFE NSW internet.

26. Approval

The TAFE NSW Higher Education Academic Council noted changes to this procedure on 5 December 2024.

Note: (17 March 2026) Accountable and Responsible Officer roles have been updated since publication, as part of an automated update associated with recent operating model changes. These updates reflect position title or organisational alignment changes only and will be captured in the version history when the document is next reviewed and published.

Appendix A: Students at academic risk flowchart

