



ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Purpose

Lincoln Education Australia (LEA**) admits students into coursework programs with every intention and expectation that students will maintain satisfactory progress throughout the duration of their course and fulfils all of the academic requirements for completion of their degree. LEA is committed to maintaining high academic standards and will operationalise systems and measures to monitor student progress and support students who are at risk of unsatisfactory course progression.

This *Academic Progress Policy and Procedures* provides a framework to guide decisions regarding student's academic performance and progression. It articulates clear responsibilities and accountabilities for decisions and processes about academic progression and ensures that these are undertaken in a transparent, consistent and equitable manner. It details the ways in which students are identified as 'at risk of making unsatisfactory progress' and 'making unsatisfactory progress', and the actions LEA will take in response to each situation.

**The trading name for the Lincoln Institute of Higher Education (LIHE) is Lincoln Education Australia (LEA).

Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled in coursework subjects and coursework degrees and all staff involved in teaching and learning and student support at LEA.

Principles

Academic Progress

Students enrolled in a course are expected to maintain satisfactory academic progress, that is, to advance in their course of study by meeting all of the academic requirements. This includes:

- completing all academic requirements of their course at a satisfactory level
- maintaining a satisfactory rate of academic progress

Subject lecturers are initially responsible for monitoring academic progress at the subject level, such as: attendance, assessment results, hurdle requirements and identifying students who may be potentially be considered 'at risk'. Subject lecturers will alert Course Coordinators, who have oversight and will continue to work closely with lecturers to



continually monitor the progress of 'at risk' students to ensure that they receive any and all necessary supports.

Satisfactory Course Progress

A student's academic/course progress will be assessed using the results of their subjects studied for a semester. At the end of each semester, students deemed to have satisfactory course progress will have achieved a result of 50% or more for each of the subjects attempted in each semester and not failed any subject more than once.

Students "At Risk"

Students will be identified as "at risk" of making unsatisfactory progress in their course of study if they:

- Show signs of failing a subject due to poor achievement in assessment tasks;
- Fail a compulsory subject for the first time;
- Fail 50% or more of their enrolled credit points in the study period under review;
- Fail to meet attendance requirements or hurdle tasks; or,
- Are unlikely to complete the course within the maximum period of study.

Students "At Risk" Indicators

There are several risk indicators of students being unable to complete their course. They include:

1. Poor attendance in class or online: Students are expected to attend 80% of classes and however for the purposes of this policy poor attendance is defined as missing at least 2 classes in succession or 3 classes cumulatively without good reason. Where poor attendance occurs the Course Coordinator is required to contact the student to stress the importance of regular attendance. Attendance should be recorded in the student database, along with the subject results.
2. Poor use of the on-line Learning Management System (LMS). This occurs where a student has not accessed the on-line LMS for 3 consecutive weeks or where the access time over that period is less than 1 hour. In such cases the Course Co-Ordinator is required to contact the student to stress the importance of using these resources and to ascertain whether there are any issues on which the student needs support and/or whether referral to other support services is appropriate. In this regard the Student Support, Wellbeing and Safety Policy and Procedures provides:
 - a. Academic support which includes but is not limited to study advice, language assistance, attendance, and meeting course requirements.
 - b. Welfare support which includes but is not limited to emergency, legal, and health services as well as referrals to external providers.

- c. Information and advice on complaints and appeals policies and procedures.
- d. Regularly reviews and updates to support services so that students have correct and up-to-date information.

3. Extensions for submitting an assignment may indicate medical, mental health, personal issues beyond the control of the student, or the stress of undertaking the Subject. Where appropriate, Course Coordinators should advise the student of the study supports available. Extensions should be recorded on the student database, along with the subject results.

4. Deferral of a Subject: This may indicate a risk of non-completion of the Course and may put at risk on-time completion and should be recorded on the student database.

5. Academic misconduct: This may be an indicator that a student is having difficulties in achieving the required academic standards of the course. If academic misconduct is proven, this information should be included in the student database.

Academic staff will be trained to detect students displaying any of these student risk indicators, and how to manage and respond to them appropriately. Over time, LEA will gather and analyse large volumes of data on students and their performance. It will use this data to predict students who may become at risk of making satisfactory progress and/or being able to complete their course.

Notifying At-Risk Students

Once students are identified as at-risk, the Course Coordinator will be responsible for writing to the student advising them that they are at risk of unsatisfactory progress within five (5) business days of so being identified. Following this, the Course Coordinator shall initiate an intervention strategy, monitor its progress, and record the process to its completion. These records will be monitored by the Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) and reported to the Academic Board (AB) at the end of each semester for their review. If LEA decides to extend the duration of an international student's enrolment, students must be advised 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.

Unsatisfactory Academic Progress

Students will be considered to have made unsatisfactory progress if the student:

- Fails 50% or more of their enrolled credit points in each of the last two active study periods;
- Fails a compulsory subject for the second time;
- Fails a non-compulsory subject for a second time;
- Is unable to complete their course within the timeframe specified in their CoE (for international students), or the maximum time for enrolment (for domestic students).
In such circumstances, the student will be informed about the repercussions to their

study schedule and (in the case of international students) to the student visa. The student will be referred to Student Experience Officers for assistance, including external advocacy or counselling.

- Cannot complete the course within the maximum study period; or,
- Fails to fulfill a requirement imposed as part of an earlier academic progress review process.

Academic Progress Exemptions

The Academic Board may impose variations to academic progress requirements and consequent actions, by category, on students who are identified as making unsatisfactory progress in their course.

Leave of Absence

Students who take leave of absence are subject to the requirements of this policy which will be applied equally to the subsequent progress review period upon the student's return to studies.

Monitoring Progress

Student progress towards meeting the academic progress requirements for their course is reviewed at the end of each teaching period, and determined as:

- Satisfactory academic progress
- At risk of unsatisfactory academic progress
- Unsatisfactory academic progress.

All students will have access to LEA's on-line LMS, through which they will be able to access their subject outlines, learning outcomes, and assessment instructions. Students' ongoing progress will be recorded and will be accessible by relevant staff, including lecturers, academic leaders and administrators. Students will have access to their assessment marks/grades via the LMS.

For any given subject, student assessments are generally marked by the lecturer/tutor and marks given. Whilst it is not essential for students to pass all assessments, it is critical they achieve an overall pass mark of 50% or higher.

The on-line LMS will be used to record the students' in-semester marks. Subjects must be designed in a way to allow assessors to use a combination of different relevant and appropriate assessment types to monitor student progress in a subject, including:

- Early formative assessments in all subjects (usually within the first 4 weeks of the commencement of the semester) to monitor students' progress with learning relevant information and their understanding of instructions and feedback, and to gauge the effectiveness and suitability of the learning activities.



- Summative assessments with clearly defined assessment criteria or assessment rubrics to examine the outcomes of a learning process against specific learning objectives. If there are breaches of academic integrity requirements, this will indicate the student is potentially at risk of unsatisfactory course progress. For more information on academic integrity and misconduct, see the *Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy*.

Enrolment Load Monitoring

LEA will monitor the enrolment load of all students, especially international students, at the beginning of each semester. This step is taken to ensure that students do not exceed their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) given to international students. International students must enrol in a minimum of 4 subjects per semester. International students who enrol in fewer than 4 subjects per semester will be notified of having an unsatisfactory enrolment load and may be deemed as being at-risk. Exceptions can be made if students demonstrate extenuating circumstances such as health issues or on exceptional compassionate grounds.

Compassionate and compelling circumstances

The Course Coordinator will monitor international students' enrolment load and academic progress at the end of each semester to determine if the student has met the minimum academic standards and will be able to complete their studies within the registered course duration. Where necessary an intervention strategy will be put in place. The Course Coordinator may extend the duration of an international student's study where it is clear that the student will not complete the course within the expected duration, as specified on the student's CoE.

LEA is only able to extend a student visa holder's program and CoE if:

- LEA have assessed that there are 'compassionate or compelling' circumstances and there is evidence to support this assessment (e.g. illness where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes), and/or
- an intervention strategy has been implemented, or is in the process of being implemented, for the overseas student who is at risk of not meeting course progress requirements, and/or
- an approved deferral or suspension of the overseas student's enrolment has occurred.

Completion Time

Students are required to complete courses within the prescribed timeframe. International students are expected to complete their course in the standard number of years for a student undertaking a full-time load (the registered CRICOS course duration) less any time for credit granted by LEA. This time period is noted on the student's Offer Letter and Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) document. All students will be monitored to ensure that they are on track to complete their courses within the required timeframe. Students at risk of not completing their course within the prescribed timeframe will be referred to the Course- coordinator for

further counselling and assistance.

Intervention Strategies

Intervention strategies are put in place during the teaching period and before the final summative assessment date where a student is identified as at risk of failing a subject.

All students' academic progress is monitored and reviewed during the semester and after the finalisation of semester results.

LEA aims to keep attrition at a minimum in all its courses. Attrition may be higher in certain cohorts such as:

- students in their first year of study
- part-time students
- students for whom English is not their first language
- students with significant family responsibilities and/or financial difficulties
- students on an overseas student visa
- students who are among the first in their family to enrol in higher education courses
- students who commence a course late
- adult learners who have not participated in a higher education course before
- students from a disadvantaged group

Where a student falls into two or more of the above categories, the risk of unsatisfactory progress/ attrition increases. LEA will put in place preventative actions to address these risks so that students are supported to the extent possible to lessen the possibility that they will become 'at risk'.

In addition to the orientation at commencement, students will be:

- given sufficient information about courses, thereby enabling better-informed course choices
- informed of relevant course details including withdrawal dates for subjects and courses
- given opportunities to engage in training on relevant technologies, research methods and study skills in an attempt to enhance their likelihood of success
- given individual attention, personal service, and the timely tracking of success or failure
- identified and followed up by student support staff where they are deemed not to be appropriately engaged with their studies
- be given additional academic support when they are experiencing difficulties in their studies because of poor academic performance or some other cause



- as necessary, offered additional English language instruction, such as one-on-one consultations with a Student Advisor
- given access to a range of support resources, particularly for students who may need greater assistance
- referred to qualified practitioners in cases where they feel overwhelmed, such as the initial period of adaptation when studying in a different country

Reporting on students at risk and intervention data will be provided to the relevant managers (Student Experience Manager, the Academic Quality Manager, Course Coordinator, Academic Dean) and through them to the CEO and the Academic Board.

If a student has passed less than 50% of the subjects, they are enrolled in over a period of one year, i.e. 12 months; then they are placed on conditional enrolment. Upon being placed on conditional enrolment, the student must work on a reduced study plan, as well as fulfilling other aspects of their individualised intervention strategy. If a student on conditional enrolment fails 50% of the subjects they are enrolled in as part of their reduced study plan in over the period of one year, i.e. 12 months, or fails the same subject 3 times; they may be excluded from LEA for one year. Once the year is completed, the student can apply again for admission at LEA but must mention the exclusion in their application. Students can appeal conditional enrolment and exclusion.

Assistance to Individual Students

Students identified as 'at risk' or making unsatisfactory academic progress will be assigned an academic support person (typically the subject lecturer) and a Student Support Officer to provide support on non-academic matters.

Students will be required to complete a short questionnaire and undertake an academic counselling interview to discuss their questionnaire responses and to formalise an intervention strategy to assist them in their studies.

The student will receive notice of at least 5 business days to attend the meeting and may bring a support person approved by LEA to this meeting. The meeting attendees will be:

- the Course Coordinator
- relevant teaching staff member
- relevant Student Support Officer
- the 'at risk' student (who may bring a support person)

Intervention strategies to address academic progress of individual students may include:

- enforcing minimum attendance requirements
- regular meetings with an identified LEA staff member to address key issues
- English language support at LEA (students will attend workshops or sessions designed to improve academic skills, language skills, or other technical skills)

- mandatory study plans including specific activities that are to be completed by the student
- counselling, referral to appropriate medical services and/or other appropriate support
- additional academic support (students will attend additional classes, lectures, or lab sessions to make up for lost work).
- referral to wellbeing support services
- approving leave or suspension of studies
- specific activities that are to be completed by the student

If a student who has been identified and contacted as being 'at risk' fails to attend the required academic counselling interview or does not participate in the alternative process, may be subject to the following courses of action:

- a Study Plan developed in the student's absence and sent to the student, which will constitute agreement on the part of the student to the conditions of the learning plan; or,
- the student will be required to meet with the Academic Dean or delegate to show cause as to why they should not be excluded from the course

Suspension or Termination of Enrolment

The Course Coordinator is responsible for monitoring and tracking students who are at risk and who have been identified as making unsatisfactory progress. Students on an overseas student visa are required to maintain satisfactory course progress as a condition of their student visa. Students who fail to maintain satisfactory course progress will be identified and an appropriate intervention strategy implemented as mentioned in the previous section.

If a student has failed to comply with conditions put in place to improve academic performance and/or has demonstrated unsatisfactory progress, the Course Coordinator or a delegate of the Dean may require a student to show cause as to why their enrolment should not be suspended or terminated.

The student will be required to respond in writing to the show cause letter within 20 days (see next section for details) and explain any circumstances to support their written submission.

Domestic students will be notified about LEA's intention to potentially suspend or terminate their enrolment in writing (both electronic and by hard copy). Once notified, students have the right to appeal the process and can do so through the Students Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Flowchart, accessed on the LEA website.

The procedure is different for international students. International students are notified about their unsatisfactory course progress through a series of steps:

1. The student is notified through an Intention to Report letter about their unsatisfactory course progress.



2. The student can then use all available resources, including internal and external resources, to appeal the process within the given time frame of 20 business days. During this time the student must maintain their attendance and continue to work towards completing course requirements. LEA will maintain the student's enrolment until the appeal process has been completed.

Students, both domestic and international, will be provided with support to appeal all processes before a suspension or termination of enrolment is handed out.

Student Response

Students will have the opportunity to respond to the show cause letter in writing and demonstrate why their enrolment should not be terminated. The student may also be invited to present their case to the relevant committee. The student will be able to have a support person attend if they are presenting to the committee, so long as that support person is not a lawyer.

Appeals

Students may appeal decisions made by the Course Coordinator through the process outlined in the *Student Grievances and Appeals Policy and Procedures* on the following grounds:

- That there was a procedural irregularity
- That the decision was manifestly unfair
- That new information has come to hand that was previously not able to be presented.

The student shall be informed that they have 20 days to submit an appeal regarding this decision. Students will have access to the Students Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Flowchart, via the LEA website.

Student outcome letter

The student will be notified in writing of the outcome after they have had the opportunity to respond. The written response must contain the reasons why LEA has determined the outcome as well as provide details of the student's rights to appeal the decision. All materials in relation to 'At Risk' students will be maintained on the student's file. If the results of the internal appeal are in favour of the student LEA will immediately implement any decision required and will advise the student of the outcome. If the internal appeal is unsuccessful the student will be informed of the outcome and the reasons for the decision.



The letter will also notify the student that they have the right to access the external appeals process.

Reporting for Unsatisfactory Academic Progress

LEA will only report unsatisfactory course progress in PRISMS and advise Australian Department of Home Affairs in accordance with section 19(2) of the ESOS Act (8.14) if:

a) All internal and external complaints/appeals processes have been completed and the decision or recommendation supports LEA (8.14.1)

or

b) the overseas student has chosen not to access the internal complaints and appeals process within the 20-working day period (8.14.2),

or

c) the overseas student has chosen not to access the external complaints and appeals process (8.14.3),

or

d) the overseas student withdraws from the internal or external appeals processes by notifying LEA in writing (8.14.4)

Only when the above criteria (a, b, c, d) are met the student's case may be referred to the concern administrator for cancellation of CoE, thereby notifying the Australian Department of Home Affairs of the student's breach.

Policy Implementation and Monitoring

The Academic Board delegates responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this policy to the Chief Executive Officer who in turn delegates the various aspects of the responsibilities to the Academic Dean, Course Coordinator and other managers (e.g., Student Experience Manager, Academic Quality Manager).

The Academic Board will review all periodic reports from relevant committees and staff members.

Additionally, the Academic Board will review all relevant student complaints, concerns raised by staff members, and instances of student or staff misconduct on an ongoing basis. This will include a consideration of the number and type of open cases of student at risk notifications and unsatisfactory progress notifications.



Based on these monitoring activities, the Academic Board shall provide a report to the Corporate Governance Board and ensure that findings are taken into account in planning, quality assurance and improvement processes.

Compliance

All staff members and students at Lincoln are required to comply with this policy and its procedures and with related policies and respective procedures. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action or withdrawal of rights.

File Number	LEA-GEN-COR-70004-D
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Contact Officer	Academic Dean
Legislative Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015</i>• <i>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011</i>• <i>Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)</i>• <i>National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.</i>
Supporting Documents	
Related Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Student Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures</i>• <i>English Language Entry Requirements Policy</i>• <i>Student Learning Support Policy and Procedures</i>• <i>Course Review and Continual Improvement Policy and Procedures</i>• <i>Assessment Policy</i>• <i>Equity and Diversity Policy and Procedures</i>• <i>Disability Support Policy</i>• <i>Course Modification and Tuition Fee Refund Policy and Procedures</i>• <i>International Student Services Policy and Procedures</i>
Superseded Documents	
Effective Date	13 February 2023
Next Review	3 years from the effective date

Definitions

Academic Board: Governing body responsible for academic matters, including learning and teaching, course approval, workforce planning, academic staff appointments, research and professional development, academic policies and procedures, overseeing student grievances and appeals processes.

Academic Dean: Senior member of academic staff at LEA who responsible for the academic standards of LEA and for maintaining and developing academic courses, teaching excellence and interaction with stakeholders. Plays a crucial role in defining, disseminating and supporting academic standards and values across LEA.



Academic Progress Committee: An ad hoc committee responsible for reviewing a student's unsatisfactory academic progress and determining whether conditions should be imposed or if the student should continue with their enrolment.

Academic Progress Plan: a plan that documents a student's academic results from the previous semester, reasons for unsatisfactory progress in a specific subject (or subjects), actions that the student has agreed to undertake in order to improve academic performance and relevant support services at LEA and externally.

Appeal: Process by which a student can dispute a decision made by LEA.

'At risk' student: Student who is identified as being at risk of failing a subject and therefore at risk of unsatisfactory progress through a course of study; or a student who fails a core or compulsory subject or fails 50% or more of the credit points in a study period and is thus 'at risk' of unsatisfactory progress.

Course: Sequenced program of subjects that a student enrolls in and for which they receive a degree upon graduation.

Course Coordinator: Senior academic staff member responsible for the planning and development of a course, particularly subject curriculum, and works in conjunction with other senior academic staff.

Compassionate and compelling circumstances: Compassionate and compelling circumstances are defined as circumstances outside a student's control that impact the student's ability to study. Students who are applying for a reduction of study load, leave of absence or transfer to another education provider are required to provide evidence to demonstrate that they are impacted by compassionate or compelling circumstances.

Credit points: Points allocated for successful completion of a subject. A student must complete a predetermined number of credit points to be awarded their degree.

Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act): Australian federal legislation establishing legislative requirements and standards for the quality assurance of education and training institutions offering courses to international students who are in Australia on a student visa.

Hurdle requirement: Specified attendance requirement or an assessment requirement for a subject that must be completed or submitted to pass the subject but does not have a mark that contributes to the overall mark or grade for the subject.

International student: Person enrolled in a course of study at LEA who is not a citizen of Australia or New Zealand, or an Australian Permanent Resident, and has been granted a student visa by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) to study full-time in Australia.



Review Schedule

This policy shall be reviewed by the Academic Board every three years.

Version History			
Version number:	Approved by:	Approval Date:	Revision Notes:
1.0	Academic Board	17/09/2020	New policy
1.1	Academic Board	29/11/2021	Identifying and managing unsatisfactory progress revised
1.2	Academic Board	31/01/2023	Refined policy and process for international students to satisfy CRICOS requirements
1.3	Academic Board	13/02/2023	Further updated to satisfy CRICOS requirements
1.4	Academic Board	22/02/2023	TEQSA and CRICOS requirements incorporated