Student Academic Progress (HE) Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) The purpose of this policy is to outline the principles and standards for assessing and supporting student academic progress for Higher Education students.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This policy applies to all Melbourne Polytechnic Higher Education award courses and includes:

a. All delivery locations (onshore and offshore)
b. Courses offered through partners
c. Academic teaching and administrative staff
d. Support Services staff
e. All student cohorts (domestic and international)

Section 3 - Policy

Policy Statement

(3) Melbourne Polytechnic is student centred and committed to supporting students to maintain academic progress and successfully complete their studies. Monitoring student engagement and performance enables early detection of students at risk of not maintaining satisfactory academic progress. Evidence based approaches along with early intervention strategies, academic learning support programs and other support services are implemented to support students to achieve success.

Policy Principles

(4) This policy is guided by the following principles:

a. academic staff support and assist all students to successfully complete their studies.
b. students and staff have access to transparent and clearly defined student academic progress processes.
c. students' academic performance and progress is monitored and reported each academic progress review period.
d. students identified as not maintaining academic progress standards are supported to improve their performance.
e. students are treated fairly, consistently and with respect throughout all stages of academic progress.
f. Melbourne Polytechnic staff are committed to supporting academic progress activities and are treated with respect throughout all stages of the process.

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Policy Topics

Academic Progress Standards

(5) Students are responsible for:

a. their academic performance and progress throughout the course
b. proactively engaging with their studies and incorporating assessment feedback received during the semester to improve their academic performance
c. seeking assistance if they are not maintaining satisfactory academic progress
d. Students' attendance and progress is monitored during the semester and early intervention strategies are implemented.
e. Students' academic progress is reviewed each academic progress review period. This includes:
    i. the first academic progress review period at the end of the first semester and includes summer semester and semester one enrolments.
    ii. the second academic progress review period at the end of the second semester and includes winter semester and semester two enrolments.
f. Students with incomplete results will have their academic progress reviewed after results are finalised and before the commencement of the following semester.
g. Students are expected to complete the course within ten years from the date of commencement.

Early intervention strategies during the semester

(6) Early Intervention strategies include:

a. scheduling staggered formative and summative assessment tasks during the semester to assist students to better manage their workload and verify students' understanding of concepts and capability level. For further information, refer to the Assessment, Credit and Moderation (HE) Policy.
b. monitoring student engagement, interaction with the Learning Management System (Moodle), submission of assignments, class attendance and participation, allowing for prompt intervention.
c. providing students with quality and timely assessment feedback during the semester.
d. Students identified as not maintaining the required academic progress standards are collaboratively supported by the teacher and/or Subject Coordinator and advised of learning support programs and other support services to improve their academic performance.
e. Where possible, intervention strategies are tailored to the needs of the individual learner, optimising the potential for successful outcomes.
f. Students with conditions (refer to paragraph 19 and 22) from a previous Academic Progress Review or Academic Progress Panel are monitored in the following semester to:
    i. determine if their performance has improved
    ii. provide additional support as required

Satisfactory Academic Progress

(7) A student is considered as maintaining satisfactory academic progress if they:

a. maintain proactive engagement with their studies (e.g. accessing Moodle and class participation) and satisfactorily complete assessment tasks during the semester.
b. complete more than 50% of enrolled subjects for each semester to a satisfactory pass level.
c. maintain their progress through the course to complete studies within the maximum timeframe allowable.

First stage - At Risk of Unsatisfactory Academic Progress

(8) A student is considered as at risk of unsatisfactory academic progress under any of the following criteria:

a. fail 50% or more of enrolled credit points for one semester.
b. fail a core or compulsory subject for a second time.
c. fail to meet conditions specified by a previous Academic Progress Panel or Academic Progress Review.
d. are unlikely to complete the course within the maximum timeframe allowable.

Second stage - Unsatisfactory Academic Progress

(9) A student is considered as not maintaining academic progress under any of the following criteria:

a. fail 50% or more of enrolled credit points for two successive semesters.
b. fail a core or compulsory subject for a third time.
c. fail to meet conditions specified by a previous Academic Progress Panel or Academic Progress Review.
d. fail a placement or have a placement terminate
e. fail to complete the course within the maximum timeframe allowable

(10) Commonwealth supported students or students accessing HELP loans commencing on or after 1 January 2022 who are believed to be genuine students are considered as not maintaining satisfactory academic progress if they:

a. fail more than 50% of the subjects attempted, after attempting eight or more subjects in a Bachelor level or higher-level course, or
b. fail more than 50% of the subjects attempted, after attempting four or more subjects in an Associate Degree course.

Academic Progress Review – (First stage - At Risk of Unsatisfactory Academic Progress)

(11) A student identified as at risk of unsatisfactory academic progress is invited to meet with the Head of Program or delegate as part of the Academic Progress Review process to:

a. discuss their performance and the circumstances affecting their performance
b. identify areas where they need support
c. explore support options

(12) Conditions may be set as part of the Academic Progress Review process including one or more of the following:

a. recommend or require the student to complete an Academic Improvement Plan for the following semester.
b. recommend or require the student to reduce their study load for the following semester. (Note: may result in visa implications for international students)
c. recommend or require the student to attend specified academic learning support programs and/or seek assistance from other support services.
d. collaboratively determine any other conditions that will assist the student to improve their performance.

Academic Progress Panel – (Second stage -Unsatisfactory Academic Progress)

(13) A student demonstrating unsatisfactory academic progress is invited to attend an Academic Progress Panel meeting.

(14) The Academic Progress Panel will consider the students written submission, evaluate the circumstances that may

have contributed to the student's unsatisfactory academic progress and determine whether the student can continue their enrolment in the course.

(15) The Academic Progress Panel may determine one or more of the following conditions:

a. review, amend or require the student to complete an Academic Improvement Plan for the following semester.
b. require the student to reduce their study load for the following semester. (Note: may result in visa implications for international students)
c. require the student to take a leave of absence for up to two semesters. (Note: may result in visa implications for international students)
d. require the student to attend specified academic learning support programs and/or seek assistance from other support services.
e. grant a special assessment task. For further information, refer to the Assessment, Credit and Moderation (HE) Policy.
f. recommend the student transfer to another course.
g. exclude the student from the course for a period of 12 months.
h. determine any other conditions that will assist the student to improve their performance.

Re-admission to the course following exclusion

(16) A student excluded from a course for a period of 12 months is required to re-apply for the course through the normal course application process. For further information, refer to the Admission (HE) Policy and Admission (HE) Procedure. As well as the Assessment, Credit and Moderation (HE) Policy and Credit (HE) Procedure.

(17) Excluded students may apply for entry to other courses within the 12-month exclusion period.

Complaints and Appeals

(18) A student may lodge an appeal under any of the following grounds:

a. the outcome was not compliant with the Student Academic Progress (HE) Policy and/or Student Academic Progress (HE) Procedure published to students.
b. there is new or additional relevant information or evidence that was not previously available or considered at the time of the Academic Progress Review or Academic Progress Panel meeting which may significantly impact the original outcome.
c. compassionate or compelling circumstances.
d. there is evidence that the condition or penalty is unreasonable or excessive.

(19) A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Academic Progress Review meeting may contact the relevant Higher Education Manager to discuss the matter.

(20) If following consultation with the Higher Education Manager, the student is unable to satisfy any concerns, they may lodge an Academic Progress Appeal (written submission) with the Director of Higher Education at HEDirectorate@melbournepolytechnic.edu.au.

(21) Academic Progress Review appeals must be lodged within 10 working days from the date of the Academic Progress Review meeting.

(22) A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Academic Progress Panel may lodge an Academic Progress Appeal (written submission) with the Director of Higher Education at HEDirectorate@melbournepolytechnic.edu.au.

(23) Academic Progress Panel appeals must be lodged within 20 working days from the date on the outcome letter

from the Academic Progress Panel.

(24) Academic Progress appeals will be considered and determined by the Academic Progress Appeals panel.

(25) An Appeal to the Director Higher Education is the final stage of the internal academic appeals process at Melbourne Polytechnic.

(26) A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of an internal appeal may lodge an external appeal with the Victorian Ombudsman. (Refer to paragraph 47)

(27) A student who has a concern regarding student academic progress processes as published in the Student Academic Progress (HE) Policy and/or Student Academic Progress (HE) Procedure (e.g. time delays) may submit a complaint using the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

Section 4 - Responsibility and Accountability

(28) The Higher Education Director is responsible for:

a. ensuring this policy and associated procedures are applied consistently across teaching and administrative areas.
b. receiving and investigating Academic Progress Panel appeals.
c. reporting outcomes of Academic Progress Panels to the Higher Education Academic Board.

(29) Higher Education Managers are responsible for:

a. ensuring Academic Progress activities occur as per the policy and procedure.
b. meeting with students to discuss concerns raised following Academic Progress Review meetings.
c. participating as required in Academic Progress Review meetings.

(30) The Head of Program or delegate is responsible for:

a. meeting with students identified at risk of unsatisfactory academic progress as part of the Academic Progress Review process.
b. supporting students at risk of unsatisfactory academic progress to develop an Academic Improvement Plan to improve their performance in the following semester.
c. monitoring student academic progress.

(31) The Subject Coordinator is responsible for:

a. scheduling staggered formative and summative assessments during the semester.
b. supporting intervention strategies to be implemented during the semester.
c. monitoring student academic progress.
d. providing students with advice and guidance regarding academic learning support options, and other support services.

(32) Academic teaching staff are responsible for:

a. following the Subject Coordinator approved scheduling of formative and summative assessment tasks during the semester.
b. providing students with timely assessment feedback during the semester to build capability and improve their

performance.

c. monitoring student engagement and performance during the semester and instigating intervention strategies to improve student engagement and academic performance.
d. providing students with advice and guidance regarding academic learning support options, and other support services.
e. advising the Subject Coordinator of students who require additional assistance to improve their academic performance.

(33) Student Support Services (including Learning Skills Support, Library and Student Services) are responsible for:

a. providing learning support programs for literacy and numeracy.
b. promoting and scheduling other learning support programs to support students' capacity to better schedule and plan their study journey.
c. promoting and facilitating programs to enable students to connect online with an expert teacher or tutor to assist with studies.
d. providing counselling and mental health support to students.
e. supporting students with disabilities, mental health issues and long-term medical conditions by accommodating reasonable adjustments to support continued study.
f. supporting students to develop digital literacy, library information, referencing and research skills.

(34) Students are responsible for:

a. maintaining a satisfactory level of academic performance and course progress.
b. proactively engaging with their studies and incorporating assessment feedback received during the semester to improve their academic performance.
c. seeking assistance from the teacher and/or Subject Coordinator if they are not maintaining satisfactory academic progress at any stage of the course.
d. responding to academic progress review communications in a timely manner.
e. attending an Academic Progress Review meeting if identified at risk of unsatisfactory academic progress and taking the necessary action to carry out agreed intervention strategies included in the Academic Improvement Plan.
f. attending an Academic Progress Panel meeting if identified as not maintaining satisfactory academic progress.
g. preparing and sending a written submission in advance of the Academic Progress Panel meeting, detailing planned changes to support improved academic performance and enable continued study in the course.
h. completing the course within the maximum timeframe allowable.

(35) The Academic Progress Panel is responsible for:

a. ensuring meetings are managed respectfully and in confidence.
b. considering all circumstances affecting the student's performance including engagement with studies.
c. exploring efforts made by the student to improve their academic performance.
d. determining conditions that will support the student to improve their academic performance.
e. following the Academic Progress (HE) Panel Terms of Referenc

(36) The Academic Progress Appeal Panel is responsible for:

a. ensuring meetings are managed respectfully and in confidence.
b. considering and making determinations on appeals made by students against outcomes of the Academic

Progress Panel.

c. ensure the principles of procedural fairness are applied.
d. following the Academic Progress (HE) Appeal Panel Terms of Reference.

(37) The Executive Director Educational Excellence is accountable for ensuring the Student Academic Progress (HE) Policy and associated Procedures are fully implemented and adhered to by all relevant staff and stakeholders.

(38) The Higher Education Academic Board is responsible for reviewing the application of the relevant policy and procedures in relation to progress, process, and outcomes of student academic progress.

Section 5 - Supporting Documents and Templates

(39) Related Melbourne Polytechnic policies and procedures:

a. Academic Improvement Plan
b. Academic Progress (HE) Appeals Panel Terms of Reference
c. Academic Progress (HE) Panel Terms of Reference
d. Assessment, Credit and Moderation (HE) Policy
e. Assessment (HE) Procedure
f. Course Structure (HE) Policy
g. Credit (HE) Procedure
h. Examinations and Integrity (HE) Committee Terms of Reference
i. International Student Studying on a Student Visa Policy
j. International Students Course Progress and Attendance Procedure
k. International Students Deferral Suspension Cancellation of Enrolment Procedure
l. International Students Withdrawal Transfer and Refund Procedure
m. Admission (HE) Policy
n. Admission (HE) Procedure
o. Student Academic Progress (HE) Procedure
p. Student Complaints and Appeals Policy
q. Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure
r. Student Support Policy

Section 6 - Related Legislation and Regulation

a. Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Framework
b. National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
c. Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
d. Higher Education Support Act 2003
e. Study Assist Low Completion Rate
f. Victorian Ombudsman

Section 7 - Definitions

(40) For the purpose of this policy the following definitions apply:

a. Academic Improvement Plan: An action plan that identifies the steps a student will take to improve their performance in the following semester. It may include attending academic skills support programs, joining a study group, or counselling.
b. Academic Progress Appeal Panel (APAP): A panel that makes determinations in relation to appeals from students who are dissatisfied with an outcome of the Academic Progress Panel.
c. Academic Progress Panel (APP): A panel that makes determinations in relation to students with unsatisfactory academic progress.
d. Academic Progress Review (APR): A meeting held at the end of the semester to help students identified at risk of unsatisfactory academic progress get back on track. Some of the aspects covered in the meeting include academic and pastoral support options, intervention strategies and current course plan to assist with improving academic progress.
e. Academic progress review period: There are two academic progress review periods each year when students' academic progress is reviewed. The first academic progress review period occurs at the end of the first semester and includes summer semester and semester one enrolments. The second review period occurs at the end of the second semester and includes winter semester and semester two enrolments.
f. At risk of unsatisfactory progress: A student identified as experiencing difficulties with their studies and may require additional support to maintain a satisfactory level of academic performance in their course. These students are asked to attend an Academic Progress Review meeting at the end of the semester.
g. Conditions: Specific requirements determined as part of Academic Progress Review or an Academic Progress Panel meeting such as reducing study load, attending academic skills support programs, or taking a leave of absence from the course.
h. Exclusion: An outcome of an Academic Progress Panel that a student is not permitted to continue in the current enrolled course of study for a period of 12 months due to unsatisfactory academic progress.
i. Formative assessment: An assessment that provides students with feedback on their progress that can then be incorporated in subsequent assessment tasks and learning activities.
j. Genuine student: A domestic student who is aware of the requirements of the course, is reasonably engaged in the course and participating in assessment activities.
k. Intervention strategies: Approaches applied during the semester to assist students to improve academic performance such as attending academic skills support programs or joining a study group.
l. Satisfactory academic progress: Maintaining a satisfactory level of academic performance and progress towards completion of the enrolled course of study.
m. Submission for Academic Progress Panel: A document detailing the circumstances that affected the students' performance during the semester along with planned changes to support improved academic performance and continued study in the course.
n. Summative assessment: An assessment that measures the final level of student success in achieving learning outcomes.
o. Supporting documentation: Evidence to support a written submission including but not limited to a letter from a doctor or counsellor, evidence of use of support services.
p. Unsatisfactory academic progress: Failing to maintain satisfactory progress towards completion of the enrolled course of study.

Status and Details

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Policy Owner	Marc Blanks Executive Director Educational Excellence
Policy Implementation Officer	Nicola Cooley Director Higher Education
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