



Academic Progress and Intervention Policy

Policy Area: Academic Governance

Approval: Chair, Academic Council

Signature:

Date:

1. PURPOSE

The Sheridan Board of Directors developed this policy to set out the process for identifying and assisting students at risk of not making satisfactory academic progress. The policy requires that academic staff systematically monitor and assess students' progress, and promotes strategies for early detection of students at risk of failing and timely intervention to support them in their studies.

Sheridan strives to maintain a supportive learning environment, where the academic progress of every student is systematically monitored and supportive intervention provided where necessary to give students their best chance of success in their studies. However, each student is responsible for maintaining satisfactory academic progress, and failure to do so has serious consequences. Course progression requirements for overseas students are specified in Section 19 of the [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000](#), and students are notified that Sheridan will report any student who breaches the course progression requirements.

Sheridan students are normally expected to maintain satisfactory academic progress by passing all units in which they are enrolled. A student who fails any unit they have attempted are at risk of not completing the course in the minimum time frame. A student who does not pass 50% of their enrolled units in any given learning period (ie trimester) has not maintained minimum academic progress and is at risk of not being allowed to continue in the course. Additionally, a student who has failed a unit twice has not maintained minimum academic progress and is at risk of not being allowed to continue in the course.

2. RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Initial approval of policy:	Board of Directors
Amendment of procedures consistent with the policy:	Executive Principal (Chair of Academic Council)
Distribution of policy:	Executive Principal (Chair of Academic Council)
Implementation of policy:	Executive Principal, Academic Principal, Faculty, Moderators, Academic Council, Director of Student Services, Board of Directors
Monitoring of and compliance with policy:	Academic Council, Executive Principal, Academic Principal

Evaluation and recommendations for amendments:	Academic Council, Executive Principal, Academic Principal, Faculty, Director of Student Services
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3. ACADEMIC CALENDAR AND STUDENT WORKLOAD

The Sheridan academic calendar comprises three learning periods per year, known as “trimesters”. Each trimester incorporates 12 weeks of teaching, 2 week-long study breaks, and an examination week.

Trimesters 1 and 3 are standard teaching and learning trimesters. Full-time students will take three to four units in each of these trimesters.

Trimester 2 at Sheridan is a special teaching and learning period centred on a single research unit. Full-time time students in good standing will enrol in the one research unit only in Trimester 2. The Institute also offers a number of voluntary, extra-curricular activities during Trimester 2.

Students are regarded as taking an annual full-time workload when they are enrolled in a minimum of twenty four (24) or more credit points across three trimesters in a given year. Students are regarded as part-time when they take less than twenty four (24) credit points per year.

4. STRATEGIES

Sheridan staff employ a range of coordinated strategies to encourage and support students’ progression through their courses. Before each learning period (ie trimester) commences the Academic Principal monitors the assessment processes in each Faculty to ensure appropriate student loads and scheduling of requirements. During the learning period the Lecturer monitors attendance and academic progress at the unit level, engaging the students in early assessment wherever possible to enable the Lecturer to identify possible problems, and talks with students about appropriate support. At this point the Lecturer may seek input from the Academic Principal (see the *In-Term Intervention Policy*). The Academic Principal monitors the progress of all students at the end of the learning period, and will discuss further intervention strategies as required with the Faculty, the Director of Student Services and the Academic Council.

At the end of the trimester, students who do not pass 50% of their enrolled units are reported to the Board of Directors as failing to maintain minimum academic progress. The Board will instruct the Academic Principal to place such students on probation for the following learning period. They receive with their results a written formal notification from the Academic Principal enclosing a copy of the Academic Progress and Intervention Policy. The notification will inform the student that any failure in the probationary trimester will result in him/her being asked “Show Cause” to the Board of Directors why he/she should be allowed to continue in the course. The notification may contain additional requirements, e.g. a reduced study load for one learning period.

This end-of-learning period intervention strategy aims to warn students of the seriousness of the situation, to encourage them to access support services, and to ensure they understand their responsibility for maintaining satisfactory academic progress.

The Academic Principal and the Director of Student Services will monitor the progress of any student on probation; the Director of Student Services may encourage the student to identify and address any personal issues that may be influencing academic progress. The Director of Student Services will remind the student of support services they can access, and will ensure international students comply with their visa conditions.

Students who wish to take a Leave of Absence or reduce their study load can discuss this with the Academic Principal.

In the case of overseas students who have failed more than 50% of the course requirements in a learning period, the written formal notification includes a warning that failure to achieve passing grades for all units in their probationary learning period will result in them being reported to the Department of Home Affairs as not meeting the course progression requirements. This will normally lead to the cancellation of the student's visa.

Any formal notification from the Director of Student Services will refer students to the Sheridan Student Grievance Procedure and advise them that they are able to appeal within 20 working days.

Sheridan encourages open dialogue between staff and students at all stages of the students' academic program so that problems and difficulties can be identified and overcome before they affect course progression. Staff will document their monitoring and intervention strategies to ensure students receive the best possible assistance to achieve their study goals.

5. PROCEDURE

Staff will employ the following strategies and guidelines to monitor and support student progression.

- 5.1. Before each learning period (trimester) commences the Academic Principal monitors the assessment processes in the Institute to ensure appropriate student loads and scheduling of requirements.
- 5.2. During the learning period (trimester) Lecturers monitor the academic progress of students in their units, engaging the students in early assessment wherever possible to enable the Lecturer to identify possible problems and intervene with clarification, assistance and recommendations. Lecturers will document all such intervention strategies for the class file.
- 5.3. If difficulties persist the Lecturer will normally consult with the Academic Principal. The Academic Principal and the Director of Student Services will also talk with the student. Strategies discussed may include advising the student to:
 - a. complete an academic skills program
 - b. receive individual case management
 - c. attend counselling
 - d. receive assistance with personal issues that are influencing progress
 - e. be placed in a suitable alternative unit or course
 - f. reduce their course load.

The Academic Principal will formalise the discussion in the form of a letter notifying the student that he/she is at risk of not passing the unit(s) and advising strategies to give the student the best opportunity of succeeding.

- 5.4. At the end of learning period (trimester or intensive block) the Academic Principal produces a progression report as part of the moderation process. A student will be identified "at risk" when, in any given learning period the student:
 - a. does not pass 50% or more of the enrolled units, or
 - b. fails a unit for the second time, or
 - c. fails to meet any conditions previously imposed on the student's enrolment, or
 - d. fails to complete the course in the maximum period allowed.
- 5.5. Each such student will be discussed during moderation, and included in the Moderation Report to the Academic Council, together with recommendations for intervention. While the Academic Council may overrule in any particular case, the normal interventions are as follows:

5.6. Probation

- 5.6.1. Students who do not pass 50% of their enrolled units are placed on probation for the following learning period (trimester or intensive block). They receive with their results a written formal notification from the Director of Student Services that they have not maintained satisfactory academic progress and are therefore at risk of not being able to complete the course. This letter will inform the student that any failure in the probationary learning period will result in a request to Show Cause to the Board of Directors why they should not be excluded from their course. The letter will also direct the student to meet with the Academic Principal and the Director of Student Services to canvass strategies for improving the student's likelihood of academic success and to develop an agreed course plan, one copy of which stays with the student while the second copy is placed in the student file. The Academic Principal and the Director of Student Services will monitor students at risk during their probationary learning period.
- 5.6.2. A student who has failed a required unit for a second time will receive a similar notification about being placed on probation because they have not maintained satisfactory academic progress. This student would also be referred to the Academic Principal and the Director of Student Services for advice and support, but warned that a third failure in this unit will lead to a request for the student to Show Cause why they should not be excluded from the course.
- 5.6.3. The Academic Principal and the Director of Student Services will monitor the progress of any student on probation, and may encourage the student to identify and address any personal issues that may be influencing academic progress. The Director of Student Services will remind the student of support services they can access, and will ensure international students comply with their visa conditions. Students who wish to take a Leave of Absence or reduce their study load can discuss this with the Academic Principal.

- 5.6.4. In the case of overseas students who have failed more than 50% of the course requirements in a learning period, the written formal notification includes a warning that failure to achieve passing grades for all units in their probationary learning period will result in them being reported to the Department of Home Affairs as not meeting the course progression requirements. Students will be warned that this will normally lead to the cancellation of the student's visa.
- 5.6.5. Any formal notification from the Director of Student Services will refer students to the Sheridan Academic Grievance Procedure and advise them that they are able to appeal within 20 working days.

5.7. Showing Cause, Exclusion, Reporting

- 5.7.1. Identifying students who are required to Show Cause. Students on probation who do not pass all the units they attempt in their probationary learning period are required to Show Cause why they should not be excluded from their course.
- 5.7.2. Managing students required to Show Cause. As soon as possible following the release of learning period-end results students identified as needing to Show Cause will receive a formal letter from the Director of Student Services with their results, advising them to Show Cause to the Board of Directors why they should not be excluded from the course. The Show Cause letter will advise the student that:
 - a. they have been at risk of failing to maintain satisfactory academic progress;
 - b. they are now formally required to Show Cause within 10 working days why they should not be excluded from the course;
 - c. failure to Show Cause will lead to automatic exclusion from the course;
 - d. they should approach the Director of Student Services for advice and/or assistance.
- 5.7.3. Students must respond to the Show Cause letter in writing within the time period set out in the letter to enable progression to the next learning period if approved. The response must indicate in one page or less:
 - a. the reasons for their previous performance, supported by documentary evidence
 - b. any remedial action undertaken since they were advised of being at risk, and
 - c. how they intend to improve their academic performance if permitted to continue.
- 5.7.4. The written response and documentary evidence will be considered by the Board of Directors. The student may elect to be interviewed in person, in which case the Board of Directors will appoint a subcommittee for this purpose. The student may bring a support person who is not a legal representative and who will have no right of speech except by invitation of the convenor. The subcommittee will make a determination based on the student's previous academic record and information provided.

- 5.7.5. If the student is determined to make satisfactory progress, the Board of Directors or its subcommittee may permit the student to continue for one more learning period of probation, with specified enrolment conditions.
- 5.7.6. If the student does not demonstrate determination to make satisfactory progress, the Board of Directors may exclude the student from the course, or exclude the student from the course for a specified period.
- 5.7.7. The Director of Student Services writes the formal notification of the outcome of the Show Cause review, advising the student that they are able to access the student grievance procedures to lodge an appeal within 20 working days if they believe the assessment has been made in error. The Director of Student Services will not process a course exclusion until the 20 days appeal period has passed and any appeal processing has been finalised. In hearing this grievance, the Student Grievance Committee may only determine if the Board of Directors has followed due process.
- 5.7.8. The Director of Student Services also reports to the Department of Home Affairs any overseas student who is not able to complete their course within the terms of their student visa. The directions and forms for reporting non-compliance with student visa conditions through unsatisfactory course progress are available on PRISMS (*Reporting Quick Reference Guide*). The Director of Student Services will not report a student for non-compliance with student visa conditions until the 20 days appeals period has passed and any appeal processing has been finalised.

6. APPENDIX: DOCUMENT HISTORY AND VERSION CONTROL RECORD

Document Title:	Academic Progress and Intervention Policy
Source Documents:	<p><i>Adapted with permission from:</i> Wesley Institute Academic Progress and Intervention Policy Wesley Institute Academic Progress and Intervention Procedure</p> <p><i>Other sources:</i> University of Newcastle Review of Progress Procedure Australian College of Theology Progression and Intervention Policy</p>
Associated Internal Documents:	Sheridan Institute Student Handbook Assessment Policy Student Grievance Policy
Associated External Documents	Australian Universities Teaching Committee, Assessing Learning in Australian Universities Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 – https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00292 National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 - https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017L01182
Authorised Officer:	Chairperson, Academic Council
Approved by:	Prof Paul Slatter
Date of Approval:	24 Jun 2019
Next Review Before:	Jun 2022

Version Number	Version Date	Authorised Officer	Amendment Details
0.01	30/05/2011	N/A	Draft prepared for Sheridan College and Vose College
0.02	04/02/2013	N/A	Revised for Sheridan College Board of Directors
1.00	02 Mar 2013	Chairperson, Board of Directors	Submitted to TEQSA for Sheridan College HEP registration: Attachment 6.3c Academic Progress and Intervention Policy
1.01	16 Dec 2014	Chairperson, Board of Directors	Change to version control box
1.02	09 Oct 2015	Chair, Academic Council	Substitution of "Registrar" with "Director of Student Services" to reflect change in organisational structure. Substitution of "Head of Department" with "Academic Principal" to reflect change in organisational structure. Replacement of references to semester with learning period (trimester and intensive blocks) to reflect changes to academic calendar.
2.00	24 Jun 2016	-	Revised by Teaching and Learning subcommittee of Academic Council, based on v1.01.

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			<p>Corrections to grammar in Clause 1.</p> <p>Replacement of "chance" with "likelihood" in Clause 4.6.1.</p> <p>Replacement of references to "semester" with "trimester".</p> <p>Noted the need to update offices/positions at Sheridan Institute to reflect current practice.</p> <p>Delete of "as" in Clause 4.4.</p>
2.01	29 Jun 2016	Chair, Academic Council	<p>Edits from versions 1.02 and 2.00 combined.</p> <p>Replacement of "It" with "The policy" in clause 1.</p> <p>Insertion of new Clause 2: Academic Calendar and Student Workload. Subsequent sections adjusted accordingly.</p> <p>Standardise the term Show Cause (ie: quotation marks used in the first instance only and both words capitalised throughout the document).</p>
2.02	24 April 2017	Chairperson, Academic Council	Minor edits to ensure Threshold compliance
2.03	15 April 2019	Chairperson, Academic Council	Minor edits to ensure CRICOS compliance
2.04	16 April 2019	Chairperson, Academic Council	Removal of references to "intensive blocks"
2.05	24 June 2019	Chairperson, Academic Council	Change of full-time load description from minimum seven (7) units to minimum twenty four (24) credit points per year. Legislation references updated.
2.06	27 October 2020		<p>References to "Sheridan College" changed to "Sheridan Institute".</p> <p>Update of logo to "Sheridan Institute of Higher Education" logo.</p>