



# 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 and those who have made unsatisfactory course 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. According to the Higher Education Standards Framework Sheridan is required to monitor students and provide feedback and support to students where needed. In addition, according to the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students and according to student visa requirements Sheridan is required to monitor and review students' course progress. Sheridan is also required to notify the Department of Home Affairs if it is determined a student has not made satisfactory course progress. Students are notified that Sheridan will report any student who breaches the course progression requirements.

## 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, 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

### 3. ACADEMIC CALENDAR AND STUDENT WORKLOAD

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

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 two semesters in a given 12 month period. Students are regarded as part-time when they take less than twenty four (24) credit points per year.

### 4. CRITERIA FOR AT RISK AND UNSATISFACTORY COURSE PROGRESS

Sheridan students are normally expected to maintain satisfactory academic progress. Sheridan monitors and identifies students as being either at risk of unsatisfactory course progress or as having unsatisfactory course progress according to several criteria.

4.1 Students may be identified as being at risk of unsatisfactory course progress when:

- A student fails any unit they have attempted
- A student does not pass 50% of their enrolled units in any learning period
- A student fails to meet any conditions previously imposed on the student’s enrolment
- A student fails to complete the course in the maximum period allowed

4.2 Sheridan students are identified as having unsatisfactory course progress when:

- A student has failed any unit attempted twice
- A student has been on academic probation and failed any unit while they were on academic probation
- A student has been on a suspended enrolment as part of an intervention strategy and has not acted in good faith towards Sheridan by following through with the strategies outlined in their intervention strategy
- A student is halfway through the maximum course duration and has failed to complete at least 50% of the total number of credit points required for the course
- A student is three-quarters of the way through the maximum course duration and has failed to complete three-quarters of the credit points required for the course
- A student has repeatedly been identified as at risk

### 5. STRATEGIES AND PROCEDURES

Sheridan staff employ a range of coordinated strategies to encourage and support students’ progression through their courses. 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.

5.1 Before each learning period commences the Academic Principal and Faculty Deans monitor the assessment processes in each Faculty to ensure appropriate student loads and scheduling of requirements.

5.2 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. The Lecturer will document all such early intervention strategies and notify their Faculty

Dean. At this point the Lecturer may seek input from the Faculty Dean and/or Academic Principal (see the *In-Term Intervention Policy*).

5.3 If difficulties persist, the Lecturer and/or the Faculty Dean will normally consult with the Academic Principal. The Academic Principal and/or the Director of Student Services will meet with the student. It may be recommended the student complete an intervention strategy. The intervention strategy may include steps such as:

- a. Completing an academic skills program
- b. Receiving individual case management
- c. Attending counselling
- d. Receiving assistance with personal issues that are influencing progress
- e. Being placed in a suitable alternative unit or course
- f. A reduction in the course load for a specified time period
- g. Suspension of studies for a specified time period

The Academic Principal will formalise the discussion by email notifying the student that he/she is facing the potential of being identified as "at risk". If an intervention strategy was completed, the student will also be emailed a copy.

5.4 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.

5.5 At the end of the learning period, a student who meets criteria detailed in section 4.1 may be identified by the Board of Examiners as being at risk of unsatisfactory course progress. The Academic Principal then places the student on Academic Probation for the following learning period by sending an email notification and attaching a copy of the Academic Progress and Intervention Policy.

The notification will inform the student that any failure to meet the conditions of their Academic Probation in the probationary learning period may result in him/her being identified as having unsatisfactory course progress and being asked to "Show Cause" to the Board of Directors why he/she should be allowed to continue in the course. For students who have been placed on academic probation due to failing a unit twice, this means failure of the unit for a third time will result in the student being identified as having unsatisfactory course progress and being asked to Show Cause. Any additional requirements of the student during the time they are on academic probation will also be stated in the email.

The notification will refer the student to the Sheridan Academic Grievance Procedure and advise them that they are able to make an appeal against the decision within 20 working days.

The notification may contain a requirement for the student to meet with the Academic Principal and/or the Director of Student Services to complete an agreed course plan and an intervention strategy. One copy of such documents will be given to the student while a second copy will be placed on the student file. This end-of-learning period intervention strategy aims to warn "at risk" 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.

5.6 The Academic Principal and the Director of Student Services will monitor the progress of any student on Academic Probation and keep records on steps taken by the student to improve academic progress. The Director of Student Services will ensure international students know to comply with their visa conditions.

5.7 In the case of overseas students who have been identified as "at risk" and placed on Academic Probation, 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 identified as having unsatisfactory course progress and reported to the Department of Home Affairs as not meeting the course progression requirements. In the case of students who have been placed on academic probation due to failure of a unit a second time, the written formal notification includes a warning that failure of the unit a third time will result in the student being identified as having unsatisfactory course progress and 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.

5.8 At the end of the learning period, a student who meets criteria detailed in section 4.2 may be identified by the Board of Examiners as having unsatisfactory course progress. The Academic Principal will notify the Registrar who will send the student a "Show Cause" letter.

The Show Cause letter will advise the student that:

- a. they have unsatisfactory course 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 Registrar for advice and/or assistance in preparing their written response.

5.9 Students who receive the Show Cause letter must respond 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 reason/s 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.

5.10 A student's 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.

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. The student will be required to undertake an intervention strategy which may include steps such as:

- Completing an academic skills program
- Receiving individual case management
- Attending counselling

- Receiving assistance with personal issues that are influencing progress
- Being placed in a suitable alternative unit or course
- A reduction in course load for a specified period of time
- A suspension in enrolment for a learning term

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.

5.11 The Registrar 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 against the decision 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.

5.12 The Registrar 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. A NOTE ABOUT SUSPENSION OF ENROLMENT OR REDUCTION IN COURSE LOAD

6.1 Students who have requested a reduced course load or a suspension in studies will be required to submit evidence supporting the request as well as complete and submit the required forms

6.2 Students who request or are placed on a suspension of enrolment or reduced course load will be required to complete an intervention strategy which will detail steps the student and relevant staff will take to assist the student in improving their academic progress or addressing issues which have had an impact on their academic progress. During the time of reduced course load or suspension in studies the student is expected to abide by the terms of the intervention strategy. Students who do not abide by the terms of the intervention strategy may be identified as having unsatisfactory course progress and the procedures outlined above will apply.

## 8. APPENDIX: DOCUMENT HISTORY AND VERSION CONTROL RECORD

<b>Document Title:</b>	Academic Progress and Intervention Policy
<b>Source Documents:</b>	<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>
<b>Associated Internal Documents:</b>	Sheridan Institute Student Handbook Assessment Policy Student Grievance Policy
<b>Associated External Documents</b>	Australian Universities Teaching Committee, Assessing Learning in Australian Universities Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 – <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00292">https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00292</a> National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 - <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017L01182">https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017L01182</a>
<b>Authorised Officer:</b>	Chairperson, Academic Council
<b>Approved by:</b>	Prof Paul Slatter
<b>Date of Approval:</b>	24 Jun 2019
<b>Next Review Before:</b>	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.

Academic Progress and Intervention Policy

			<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>
2.07	11/12/2021	Director of Student Services	Update of the policy to reflect further "at risk" and "unsatisfactory progress" criteria and to outline the procedures and steps taken according to those criteria.