



## ACADEMIC PROGRESS – International Students

### Policy and Procedures

#### DEFINITIONS

Terms in this document, for which definitions are not provided in the text or may not be self-evident or for which usage at ACC may differ to that in other higher education institutions are as follows:

**Academic Credibility:** Refers to the ACC's standing in the eyes of the higher education sector and Chiropractic community as a provider of a Chiropractic degree that can be trusted to uphold high academic and professional practice standards.

**Academic Integrity:** To act in a way that maintains the integrity of all academic work and is not academically dishonest in any way.

**Academic Progress (or Academic Progression):** The rate at which an international student is moving towards successful completion of their degree program through the successful completion of units of study (including practical/clinical components).

**Academic Support:** The assistance provided by the ACC for improving student study skills and enhancing their academic performance, including but not limited to English language proficiency, academic writing, computer literacy, library utilisation, assignment presentation and examination preparation.

**Cancellation (or Academic Dismissal):** Termination of an international student's enrolment in the ACC Bachelor of Chiropractic degree program or part thereof.

**External Appeal (or External Avenues of Appeal):** Avenues of Appeal that are external to, and independent of the College and which are specified in the *ACC Student Academic Appeals Procedures*.

**Internal Appeal:** Avenues of Appeal that are provided internally by the College and which are specified in the *ACC Student Academic Appeals Procedures*.

**Show Cause:** An international student who has continuing unsatisfactory academic achievement or academic misconduct, as defined by the ACC in the *Student Academic Progress Policy and Procedure and the Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure*, will be required to demonstrate (Show Cause) why they should not be excluded from their studies (that is, 'cancellation' of their enrolment or 'academic dismissal').

**Study Load:** The number of units in which a student is enrolled in any given term or semester.

#### PURPOSE

In order to maintain high academic standards and thereby academic credibility and integrity as a Higher Education Provider, the ACC requires an appropriate standard of academic achievement of its international students and optimum progression with their studies and to ensure that international students are able to complete the course within the expected duration specified on the Certificate of Enrolment and the ACC abides by the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National

Code 2018). The *Academic Progress International Students Policy and Procedures* describe the College's commitment to means of achieving this.

## SCOPE

This policy and procedures apply to all international students enrolled within the ACC.

## POLICY STATEMENT

Continuous monitoring and facilitation of optimum student academic progress is a high priority of the ACC as is the implementation of intervention strategies for international students at risk of not achieving international student progression targets and the expected duration of study specified on the international/overseas student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) which must not exceed the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) registered duration for the course. The *Academic Progress International Students Policy and Procedures* provides well-defined criteria for unsatisfactory academic progression as well as structured procedures available for identifying and removing or reducing impediments to international student progression. It also outlines clearly the circumstances in which the Academic Board may discontinue enrolment based on continuous unsatisfactory progress.

The ACC understands that its international students will come from varied educational, financial, ethnic and social backgrounds and that differing motivational and achievement levels may be associated with this. It also recognises that students may be susceptible to various difficulties during at different points in their studies many stemming from the fact that international students are living and studying in an unfamiliar environment.

Regular and frequent monitoring of student academic progress is therefore the means by which the College identifies as early as possible those international students who are demonstrating unsatisfactory academic progression, or are at risk of doing so, in order to provide support that can facilitate optimum student progression in their studies.

Through structured, targeted academic support, and programs tailored to the needs of individual international students, the ACC strives to ensure that all Students have equal opportunity for academic success.

## PROCEDURES

The following *Academic Progress Procedures* ensures consistent application of processes for the early identification of international students experiencing difficulties with their studies and are at risk of not achieving appropriate rates of progression that would allow them to complete, if possible, the expected duration of study specified in their CoE.

- 1.1. Identification of students who:
  - Fail a unit in which they are enrolled within each term; or
  - Fail the same unit a subsequent time

A Fail is allocated to grades of Fail and Withdrawn Fail.

If during the academic monitoring process an interim grade is under consideration, a passing grade will be allocated until the interim grade is finalised. Escalation of the monitoring process may take place if the final grade results in a fail and indicates unsatisfactory academic progress.

- 1.2. Assessment of academic progress on a term-by-term basis. Following certification of grades the ACC will identify and notify students in accordance with the *Academic Progress Policy*. Reporting of academic progress is completed once per term.

- 1.3. Written notification issued to all students requiring intervention. Correspondence will include, contact details of the Subject Coordinator responsible for notification and identification of the steps and actions required by the student. All correspondence in relation to the monitoring process is recorded.
- 1.4. Cancellation of enrolment, which may take place should a student proceed through Stage 2 of the Academic monitoring process.

## **2. Academic Progress Assessment Stages – Overview**

- 2.1. The following outlines the various stages of Academic Progress Intervention:

Stage 1: An international student demonstrating unsatisfactory progress is directed to attend an interview. At the interview the international student will be given an assessment of their progress and how they can continue to progress so that they are able to complete their studies as expected by the date specified on their CoE. The international student will be required to sign a future study plan that ensures the student will abide by their CoE end date. At the meeting the point at which the overseas student has failed to meet satisfactory course attendance or course progress will be determined and the impacts of any future failures by the international student will be shown to the student including a possible cancellation of their enrolment and impacts on their student visa.

Stage 2: Following a non-achievement of two consecutive terms of satisfactory progress in line with point 1.1 and with the study plan agreed at the Stage 1 interview the student is required to 'Show Cause' within 10 working days. They need to demonstrate why their enrolment should not be cancelled. If the student does not submit a response to the 'Show Cause' request or if their case is not successful, they will proceed directly to Stage 3: Intent to Cancel.

Stage 3: In the event of non-submission or unsuccessful submission of 'Show Cause', or a successful 'Show Cause' submission but a non-achievement of three consecutive terms of satisfactory academic progress that will result in the student not completing their studies by their CoE end date, the student will be notified by the Academic Board of the College's intent to cancel enrolment.

- 2.2. A student under notification of Stage 3: Intent to Cancel has the opportunity to submit an internal appeal within 20 working days of receipt of the notification if they can identify procedural error or can demonstrate extenuating circumstances along with a letter of support as detailed in the Student Academic Appeals Procedures.
- 2.3. If the student internal appeal is unsuccessful, a process for external appeal is available as detailed in the Student Academic Appeals Procedures.
- 2.4. A student who does not submit an appeal within the detailed timelines will receive a Notification of Cancellation.
- 2.5. At any stage throughout the Academic Monitoring Process, a student who has experienced extenuating circumstances can apply for a withdrawal without academic penalty.

## **3. Detailed Outline of each Academic Progress Stage**

### **Academic Progress Stage 1 – Academic Notice**

- 3.1 A student who is identified during Stage 1 monitoring will be sent written notification via email. A student on Academic notice will be required to attend an interview at which time they will be offered

academic support and learning strategies. At the interview the international student will be given an assessment of their progress and how they can continue to progress so that they are able to complete their studies as expected by the date specified on their CoE. The international student will be required to sign a future study plan that ensures the student will abide by their CoE end date.

- 3.2 During the interview the student's academic progress is reviewed, reasons for disruptions in academic progression are discussed, and intervention strategies are suggested and agreed to by the student. At this time, consequences for not achieving satisfactory academic progress are also clearly outlined. At the meeting the point at which the overseas student has failed to meet satisfactory course attendance or course progress will be determined and the impacts of any future failures by the international student will be shown to the student including a possible cancellation of their enrolment and impacts on their student visa.
- 3.3 Intervention examples may include:
- Provision of on-campus academic support;
  - Participation in or referral to counselling programs;
  - Satisfactory attendance and engagement, noted by academic teaching staff and/or in evidence in a student's engagement with unit content, through student learning platform statistics;
  - Referral to additional external tuition which is free or affordable to the international student;
  - Alteration of study load which may help the international student to successfully achieve their expected study timelines but which maintains compliance with their student visa requirements;
  - Any other recommendations to meet specific requirements.

#### **Academic Progress Stage 2 – Academic Probation**

- 3.4 A student who is identified during Stage 2 Monitoring will be sent written notification via email. This notice indicates that the student is required to 'Show Cause' (provide reason) why their enrolment should not be cancelled. The student's written 'Show Cause' response must be received within 10 working days of the issue of notice. If no attempt at a response/submission is demonstrated, the student will proceed directly to Stage 3 Notification of Intent to Cancel.
- 3.5 The College President and Academic Dean will consider the 'Show Cause' and decide if the student is able to continue. The Academic Dean will notify the student of their outcome in writing within 5 working days of receiving the international student "Show Cause" written document.
- 3.6 If the application is successful, the student is able to continue their enrolment but must achieve two (2) consecutive terms of satisfactory progress to avoid proceeding to Stage 3. The student will remain on academic probation and may be required to abide by the following conditions:
- Participation in academic support;
  - Regular meetings with a designated member of staff.
- 3.7 A successful application through an international 'Show Cause' document may result in ACC needing to extend the international student's course duration. In compliance with Standard 8 of the National Code 2018, the ACC can only extend the overseas student's enrolment if:
- ACC has assessed that there are 'Compassionate or compelling' circumstances and there is evidence to support this assessment;
  - ACC has implemented, or is in the process of implementing, an intervention strategy for the overseas student who is at risk of not meeting course progress requirements; or
  - An approved deferral or suspension of the overseas student's enrolment has occurred.

'Compassionate or compelling' circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the overseas student and which have an impact upon the overseas student's course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but are not limited to:

- serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the overseas student was unable to attend classes
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible a death certificate should be provided)
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the overseas student's studies; or
- a traumatic experience, which could include:
  - involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or
  - witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, and this has impacted on the overseas student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports)

These are only some examples of what may be considered compassionate or compelling circumstances.

ACC will use its professional judgement to assess each case on its individual merits. When determining whether compassionate or compelling circumstances exist, ACC will consider documentary evidence provided to support the claim, and copies of these documents will be kept in the overseas student's file.

- 3.8 If the ACC extends the duration of an overseas student's enrolment and the international student's visa expires prior to completion of the course, the international student will need to apply for a new Student visa (subclass 500) to complete their study. More information about the Student visa (subclass 500) is available on the Department of Home Affairs website (<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/Trav/Visa1/500->).
- 3.9 If the application is unsuccessful, the student may request a review of their application by the Academic Board. The student must request this review within five (5) working days of their unsuccessful notification.
- 3.10 A student who fails a unit or is unsuccessful in obtaining two consecutive terms of satisfactory academic progress whilst on Academic Probation will be referred to the Academic Board, the most likely consequence of which will be academic dismissal.

### **Academic Progress Stage 3 – Notification of Intent to Cancel and Report**

- 3.11 The international student will be provided written notification of the College's intention to cancel enrolment and to report the student to the Department of Home Affairs through PRISMS as not meeting course progress or, if applicable, attendance requirements.

This will apply should they:

- Not achieve a successful 'Show Cause' outcome at Stage 2 monitoring and were immediately escalated to Stage 3; or
- Were on academic probation (Stage 2 Monitoring) and failed a unit or did not achieve two consecutive terms of academic progress.

The written notification will include advice of their right to access the College's internal complaints and appeals process within 20 working days.

- 3.12 Following receipt of 'Notification of Intent to Cancel and Report' the student has 20 working days to lodge an appeal.

## **4. Appeals**

Student appeals will be processed as detailed in the Student Academic Appeals Procedures. In line with these the Academic Appeals Committee will be convened by the Academic Board and the membership will comprise an independent member of Academic Board as Chair, together with an independent member of the Board of Directors, the Academic Dean and the Student Support Officer. The student and a student support person who can assist the student and other relevant staff may also be invited to be present in

accordance with the membership of the Student Appeals Committee detailed in the College's Governance Framework and with the National Code for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code 2018).

4.1 The following documentation may be submitted in support of the student's case, and in justification of severe extenuating circumstances:

- A letter of support provided by the student's academic support officer or counsellor.
- A summary of the student's case for severe extenuating circumstances, together with validating supporting documents.

Severe extenuating circumstance include:

- Documented medical or health reasons;
- 'Compassionate and compelling' grounds due to exceptional circumstances beyond the student's control and not within the range of normal risk as detailed in 3.6.

Normal risk or situations, which are not considered as severe extenuating circumstances and therefore not deemed as grounds for appeals include:

- Inability to cope with studies or family life;
- Increased employment stress or workload;
- Personal relationship tensions;
- Social or religious demands or commitments;
- Financial hardship.

4.2 Timeline of the appeal process:

- Student lodgment of any internal and external appeal will be in line with processes detailed in the Student Academic Appeals Procedures

4.3 If unsuccessful, the student will be given written notification outlining the circumstances of the outcome and explanation for why they do not have sufficient grounds for their appeal to be upheld within 10 working days from the conclusion of the internal appeals process. For overseas students on a student visa, the written notification will include advice of their right to an external appeal and the contact details of the appropriate complaints handling and external appeals body, that being the state office of the Ombudsman for public providers or the Overseas Student Ombudsman (OSO), for private providers. The Academic Board will also advise the overseas student that in most cases the purpose of the external review is to consider whether the registered provider has followed its policies and procedures, rather than make a decision in place of the institution.

4.4 If successful, the student will be able to continue with enrolment providing that they demonstrate two consecutive terms of satisfactory academic progress. If they fail to do so they will have the opportunity to submit an additional internal and external appeal or face academic cancellation.

4.5 Enrolment will continue throughout all stages of the internal and external appeals process.

4.6 A student must notify the College of their intent to lodge an external appeal and provide the College with acknowledgement of receipt from the office of the Ombudsman as soon as possible, but no later than 5 working days after receiving acknowledgement of receipt.

4.7 In line with Standard 10 of the National Code 2018, if the internal or any external complaints handling or appeal process results in a decision or recommendation in favour of an overseas student, the College will immediately implement the decision or recommendation and/or take the preventive or corrective action required by the decision, and advise the overseas student of that action.

4.8 If the external appeal is unsuccessful the student must notify the ACC President immediately, so that relevant action can be taken to cancel their enrolment.

## **5. Cancellation of Enrolment or Academic Dismissal**

5.1 Cancellation of enrolment or academic dismissal will occur where:

- A student fails to comply with the terms of Academic Notice or Probation;
- A student has not lodged an internal appeal at Stage 3;
- A student withdraws from the appeal process, or the appeal was unsuccessful; or
- On recommendation of the Academic Board in line with relevant state and federal legislation including all standards of the National Code 2018.

5.2 Any cancellation will be applied at the end of the current term of enrolment and will be processed as detailed in the Student Academic Appeals Procedures and the Alteration of International Student Enrolment Status Policy.

5.3 A student who has been academically dismissed may reapply to the College, however they may not do so for a period of 1 year and they will need to convince the College administration of their resolve and ability to achieve satisfactory progress. Overseas students will be subject to any relevant student visa restrictions and will be advised to contact the Department of Home Affairs to clarify their eligibility to obtain a new student visa.

## **6. Readmission after Cancellation Periods**

6.1 If the readmission application is successful the Academic Registrar will determine the appropriate program entry point for the student, taking into account previous units successfully completed, and advise the student accordingly.

6.2 Failure to show satisfactory academic progress will lead to application of the monitoring process again.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Compliance, Monitoring and Review**

The process is monitored by the Academic Board in consultation with the College President.

### **Reporting**

A Student Progress Report will be provided by the Academic Dean and Subject Coordinators at the end of each term.

### **Records Management**

All relevant records and documents will be maintained in the College records system.

## **POLICY REVIEW**

The ACC's Academic Progress - *International Student Policy and Procedure* is normally reviewed every three years.

It is a policy of the ACC that any Policy or Procedure may be reviewed earlier as indicated by internal or external factors (including but not limited to such factors as changes in the guidelines of regulatory authorities, accreditation/registration requirements of the profession, or relevant legislation at state or federal level) as determined the Board of Directors and/or Academic Board.

## RELATED POLICY DOCUMENTS

- Student at Risk Policy
- Student Support Policy

## VERSION CONTROL

<b>Document:</b> I006 Academic Progress – International Students Policy and Procedures		
<b>Responsible Officer:</b> Academic Dean		
<b>Initially Approved by:</b> Academic Board		<b>Date:</b> 2 September 2020
<b>Reviewed and approved by:</b>		<b>Date:</b>
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<b>Nature of Change</b>		