

Academic Progression and Students At Risk Policy and Procedure

Approving body	Academic Board (AB)
Date approved	20 Jan 2025
Date of effect	Commencement of operation
Next scheduled review	Two years from operation commencement
Policy owner	Academic Dean
Policy contact	Academic Dean
Related Documents	Student Enrolment and Completion Policy and Procedure Stakeholder Feedback Policy and Procedure Admission Policy and Procedure Student Code of Conduct Student Appeals Policy and Procedure Student Grievance Policy and Procedure
Related Legislative and Regulatory Instruments	HESF Standard 1.1.1 HESF Standard 1.3.1 HESF Standard 1.3.2 HESF Standard 1.3.3 HESF Standard 1.3.4 HESF Standard 1.3.5 HESF Standard 6.3.2 HESF Standard 7.2.1 HESF Standard 7.2.1 Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act) Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)

Purpose

1. Zenith Innovation Institute (**Zenith / ZII / the Institute**) is committed to providing support to all students for their satisfactory coursework progress to meet course completion requirements and to graduate.
2. Students contribute to academic progression through appropriate attendance, the submission of assessments according to published criteria and awareness of and familiarity with the requirements of units and courses undertaken.
3. This Policy and Procedure sets out the approach of the Institute to supporting academic progression, particularly for at-risk students.

Scope

4. This Policy applies to:
 - (a) All students of Zenith and
 - (b) All academic staff, and student administration and support staff.

Policy

Policy statement

5. This Policy defines satisfactory and unsatisfactory academic progress and outlines procedures that apply when:
 - (a) additional support is identified and needed at an early stage and
 - (b) when a student's progress is deemed to be unsatisfactory, including intervention through to exclusion.

Policy principles

6. Zenith supports and provides opportunity for all students to succeed academically and to graduate within the maximum stated maximum course study length
7. The Institute monitors the academic performance of all students each semester to inform decisions regarding academic progress.
8. The Institute expects that students will make every effort to achieve academically.
9. Intervention will be utilised by Zenith at any time that a student is deemed as requiring additional support or being at risk.
10. The Institute will ensure interventions and appeals regarding academic progress decisions are conducted in a professional, fair and transparent manner.
11. Students are supported by:
 - (a) early feedback, which is provided to support academic success
 - (b) the provision of reasonable access to academic staff and support services including mental health
 - (c) student support services and workshops that address both personal and academic development needs including academic integrity and strategies for academic success

- (d) information provision regarding requirements to achieve satisfactory progress before the commencement of study and
- (e) access to clearly defined, equitable and fair processes for handling matters in relation to assessment and academic progress issues, including avenues of appeal against significant decisions.

Procedure

Early identification of support needs

- 12. During the first half of each semester, the Academic Dean, working with the Course Coordinator, will ensure that student progress within units is monitored that the needs of all cohorts are being met and that students in need of additional support are identified, including consideration of Special Admission Pathway and Educational Disadvantage criteria entrants.
Provisional Entry Qualifying Period students will be supported through phone or in-person check-ins during the semester with Student Services to discuss their experience with the Institute and organising support as required
- 13. The criteria for identifying students in need of additional support at this stage include:
 - (a) poor performance in an early assessment task. This task will be administered in the first four weeks of every unit. The outcomes of this assessment will be used to provide feedback to students and to identify skill deficits and
 - (b) low attendance rates or participation, evidenced by failure to access learning platforms, attend lectures / tutorials or to submit assessment items.
- 14. Students identified as requiring additional support at this stage will be advised in writing of the risk of unsatisfactory performance and the potential implications on academic progress and visa status if applicable and available academic and personal support services at Zenith.

Students at Risk

- 15. Students do not achieve minimum academic standards and are deemed 'at risk' by the following indicators:
 - (a) fail fifty percent or more of their enrolled units in any semester and/or
 - (b) fail the same unit more than once and/or
 - (c) fail to make sufficient academic progress to complete the course within the maximum candidature and/or
 - (d) self identification and referral by students for risk of their own academic non-progression.
- 16. The Academic Dean will review students who have been identified as 'at risk' after publication of results for each semester and within a week, will:
 - (a) advise students in writing of failure to meet minimum academic standards
 - (b) require the student to attend an academic counselling session with a view to establishing an intervention strategy and
 - (c) require the student to enter into an academic learning support service with the Institute.

Academic learning support

- 17. The goals of intervention and the academic learning support are to identify issues limiting progression for at-risk students, to provide appropriate advice and support, and to assist with academic result improvement in the following semester. This support may include:

- (a) academic skills workshops and support sessions
- (b) individual case management
- (c) peer support or mentoring arrangements
- (d) minimum class attendance requirement
- (e) personal counselling
- (f) reduced study load
- (g) changes in course enrolment
- (h) conditions on enrolment,
- (i) any other support service and/or
- (j) any combination of the above.

18. Student counselling sessions and attendance at support sessions will be monitored and recorded in the student file.

Progress in the following semester

19. Students whose performance improves over the following semester may choose to continue to access support through learning support services arrangements.

Unsatisfactory progress

20. Students who do not meet the minimum academic standards after receiving support provided through the academic learning support services over a semester of study will be informed by the Academic Dean in writing within 1 week of the release of grades that:

- (a) unsatisfactory progress continues to be made and the student is under consideration for exclusion from their course
- (b) a written statement is required within twenty (20) business days from the date of receipt of the letter, outlining why they should be permitted to continue with their course of study and
- (c) they may be required to make a submission in person to a student progress panel and are entitled to bring a support person to any panel meeting.

21. In accordance with the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018*, international students will also receive an Intention to Report Letter when they have failed to meet minimum academic standards for two consecutive semesters despite intervention support.

22. As international students are granted a visa which expires at the completion of the normal registered course duration (three years for a bachelors degree / two years for a Masters degree) in full-time mode, unsatisfactory progress may impact on their visa status and capacity for course completion.

23. If a student fails to submit a written statement by the due date, the enrolment will be cancelled by the Institute. International students in that situation will be reported to the Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS, following the exhaustion of any relevant appeals process.

Student Progress Panel

24. The Academic Dean will convene a student progress panel to consider any submission by a student and to determine whether there are any valid circumstances which have prevented the student from making satisfactory progress in their course.

25. The panel will consist of:

- (a) the Academic Dean as Chair

- (b) the relevant Course Coordinator and
- (c) another academic staff member who has no connection with the student.

26. The Institute will ensure that there is no conflict of interest as result of an academic staff member's previous or ongoing involvement as a student progress panel member.

27. The panel will consider any written or verbal submission by a student and decide on one of the following actions:

- (a) terminate the student's enrolment
- (b) continue the student's enrolment with specific conditions
- (c) continue the student's enrolment without conditions and
- (d) suspend the student's enrolment where there are compassionate and compelling circumstances.

28. The Academic Dean will communicate the decision made to the student in writing within ten working days from the meeting of the panel.

29. A student who is permitted to enrol with conditions but continues to make unsatisfactory progress or breaches the conditions imposed on their enrolment will have their enrolment terminated.

Re-admission following exclusion

30. A student who is excluded from their course of study because of unsatisfactory academic progress may not apply for re-enrolment to the Institute for at least one semester of study.

31. Students seeking to re-enrol must re-apply in accordance with the Institute's *Admission Policy and Procedure* and must provide evidence that the circumstances inhibiting academic progress have been resolved or actions have been taken to improve their capacity to succeed academically.

Failure to complete within the maximum candidature

32. A student who is identified for termination of enrolment due to exceeding the maximum candidature may apply to the Academic Dean to seek an extension based on evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances. This is an option only where the student can be reasonably expected to complete the course within a maximum of two further semesters.

33. An application for an extension to maximum candidature must be submitted in writing one semester prior to the expiry of the maximum candidature for completion. The application will be considered on the basis of the evidence provided and the student's prior study record in consultation with the Course Coordinator. The Academic Dean will inform the student of the decision within twenty (20) business days of receiving the application for extension.

34. A student who fails to complete their course within the maximum period listed below (including any extension of time granted by the Academic Dean) will have their enrolment terminated. The final record of results will include a notification indicating that the maximum candidature was exceeded.

The normal maximum time to complete an award course is $2n + 2$ years, where n is the full-time equivalent duration of the course in years.

Full-time equivalent course duration	Maximum time to complete
1 year	3 years
2 years	6 years
3 years	8 years
4 years	10 years

Appeals

35. A student may appeal against a decision made under this Policy under the provisions in the *Student Appeals Policy and Procedure* and the *Student Grievance Policy and Procedure*.
36. The Institute will commence assessment of complaints or appeals, acknowledging receipt of complaints within five (5) working days and acknowledging receipt of appeals within ten (10) working days. Responses will be finalised as soon as practicable, in accordance with the *National Code 2018*.¹
37. Students will be able to request information on the status and progression of their complaints or appeals.
38. As noted above, the Institute will ensure that there is no conflict of interest as result of an academic staff member's previous or ongoing involvement as a student progress panel member.

Monitoring and improvement

39. Zenith collects progress and completion data of all students, including data concerning unsatisfactory progress and outcomes.
40. The Academic Dean will provide a report to Academic Board via the Teaching and Learning Committee each semester with analysis by student sub-cohort and trends over time. Recommendations from this analysis will be directed towards the implementation of any required strategies tailored to the needs of identified sub-cohorts of students and to inform policy and practice in admissions and credit where appropriate.
41. The Institute will benchmark its performance against relevant sector data and establish targets as appropriate.

Responsibilities

42. Course Coordinators are responsible for:
 - (a) overseeing and monitoring the attendance and participation of all students
 - (b) ensuring that early assessment opportunities are employed in all units and that appropriate feedback and support is provided to students
 - (c) negotiating and implementing intervention strategies for students at risk and
 - (d) participating in progress panels as required.
43. The Academic Dean is responsible for:
 - (a) working with Course Coordinators to ensure that the progress of every student is monitored and that any needs for additional support are identified at an early stage in each unit
 - (b) identifying students for engagement with and development of an academic learning support contract
 - (c) confirming students who have made unsatisfactory progress
 - (d) convening student progress panels and
 - (e) reporting to the Academic Board on progress data and analysis, and making any consequent recommendations.

¹ National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Standard 10.2.3)

Definitions

44. For the purposes of this document, the following terms are defined as follows:

Term	Definition
At Risk	A student is considered to be 'at risk' when academic progression is deemed unsatisfactory according to the criteria set out in this Policy. Failing the same unit three times within two years is an indicator of unsatisfactory academic progress, as it demonstrates a failure to meet the necessary academic standards and poses a significant risk to timely course completion.
Maximum candidature:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The maximum candidature for a domestic student to complete a course is calculated by doubling the years required to complete the course on a normal full-time basis and adding one year ■ Maximum candidature for international students on an Australian student visa is the duration specified on their Confirmation of Enrolment and is the normal registered course duration (three years for a bachelors degree / two years for a Masters degree) in full-time mode
Satisfactory academic progress	A student is making satisfactory academic progress when progression towards completion requirements occurs at a rate that achieves all course requirements within the maximum candidature for that course.

Version control

Version	Changes	Approval Body	Approval Date
1.0	New Policy	Academic Board (AB)	
1.1	<p>Renamed "Academic Learning Support Contract" to "Academic Learning Support"</p> <p>Point 16 c) updated "contract" to "support service with the Institute"</p> <p>Point 19 updated "contract" to "services" and updated the statement from "Students whose performance improves over the following semester will have their 'at-risk status' rescinded but may choose to continue to access support through learning support services arrangements" to "Students whose performance improves over the following semester may choose to continue to access support through learning support services arrangements."</p> <p>Point 20 updated "contract" to "services"</p> <p>Point 33 updated "working" to "business"</p> <p>Point 20 updated "twenty (20) days" to "twenty (20) business days"</p> <p>Point 15 and 16 swapped to ensure better flow.</p>	Academic Board (AB)	03 Apr 2024



	Point 23 updated “relevant government department” with “Department of Home Affairs”		
1.2	<p>Added “Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)</p> <p>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act)</p> <p>Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)” under Related Legislative and Regulatory Instruments</p> <p>Point 1 reworded from “Zenith Innovation Institute (Zenith / ZII / the Institute) is committed to ensuring that all students make satisfactory coursework progress, meet course completion requirements and are eligible to graduate” to “Zenith Innovation Institute (Zenith / ZII / the Institute) is committed to providing support to all students for their satisfactory coursework progress to meet course completion requirements and to graduate.”</p> <p>Point 2 replaced “according to all know criteria” to “according to published criteria”</p> <p>Point 12 added “Provisional Entry Qualifying Period students will be supported through phone or in-person check-ins during the semester with Student Services to discuss their experience with the Institute and organising support as required”</p> <p>Swapped Point 15 and 16</p> <p>Point 34 added the maximum time specification for course completion.</p> <p>At Risk Definition added “Failing the same unit three times within two years is an indicator of unsatisfactory academic progress, as it demonstrates a failure to meet the necessary academic standards and poses a significant risk to timely course completion.”</p> <p>Added Appendix 1 outlining the process</p>	Academic Board (AB)	20 Jan 2025

Appendix 1

Activity	Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Free Student Support Services	Students given Student Handbook with workshop details during Orientation.	Orientation	Student Support Officers
	Students attend compulsory academic and non-academic workshops.	Beginning of course enrolment	Student Support Officers
	Students notified of workshop dates via noticeboards and website.	During Orientation	Student Support Officers
Early Intervention (Weeks 1-4)	Collect data on student performance (formative assessments, attendance).	Weeks 1-4	Tutors, Lecturers
	Analyse performance and notify students for support sessions.	Week 5	Course Coordinator
	Conduct student support sessions and provide written advice on support services.	Weeks 6-7	Student Support Officers
Student-At-Risk (Semester A)	Email students deemed at risk to attend counselling sessions.	Within 1 week post Semester A results release	Course Coordinator
	Conduct academic counselling for at-risk students.	2-3 weeks post Semester A results release	Student Support Officers
Student-At-Risk (Semester B)	Dean emails SAR students failing to meet minimum progress.	1 working day post Semester B results release	Academic Dean
	SAR students submit written statements explaining why they should continue enrolment.	Within 20 working days post Semester B results	SAR students
	Dean responds with a decision and appeal rights.	Within 20 working days of receiving statement	Academic Dean
Non-Submission of Written Statement	International students issued Intention to Report Letter.	Following non-submission within 20-day deadline	Academic Dean
	Students informed of 20 working days to access grievance handling process.	Upon receipt of Intention to Report Letter	Academic Dean
Review of Decision	Students submit written appeals for decision reviews.	Within 10 working days of receiving decision	SAR students
	Dean reviews and responds to appeals.	Within 20 working days of receiving appeal	Academic Dean



Activity	Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Progress Panel	Progress Panel convenes to decide on SAR status (e.g., termination, suspension, conditions).	Upon receiving SAR's written or verbal submissions	Academic Dean, Course Coordinator, Progress Panel
	Decision communicated in writing.	Within 10 working days post-panel meeting	Academic Dean
Re-admission Following Exclusion	Students excluded for unsatisfactory progress may reapply for enrolment.	Minimum of 1 semester post-exclusion	SAR students
Maximum Candidature Exceeded	Students apply for extension to maximum candidature due to compelling circumstances.	1 semester before maximum candidature expiry	Academic Dean, Course Coordinator
	Decision on extension communicated.	Within 20 business days of application	Academic Dean

Notes:

SAR – Students At Risk