

Student Progression, Exclusion and Graduation Policy and Procedure

1. Policy Statement and Purpose

Study Group Australia Pty Ltd (SGA) provides rules for students to meet course completion requirements, to define the grounds for exclusion related to lack of progress, and to detail confirmation of student course completion and eligibility to graduate.

2. Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all students enrolled in a High School, Foundationⁱ, ELICOS or Higher Education course delivered and awarded by a SGA College listed in the footer of this document and is for use by students and staff.

3. Definitions and Abbreviations

Academic Director means the lead senior academic staff member for the College (or their delegate, e.g. Course Coordinator/Head of Program). May also be referred to as Director Academic Programs, Dean, Program(s) Manager or College program lead.

Compassionate and compelling circumstances by the National Code are generally beyond the control of the student and have an impact upon the student's course progress or wellbeing. These may include, but are not limited to:

- serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the 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 student's studies; or
- a traumatic experience such as involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident, witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, and other such incidents which have impacted on the student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports).

Please note that these are only some of examples of what may be considered compassionate or compelling circumstances. SGA will use its professional judgement and assess each case on its individual merits. When determining whether compassionate or compelling circumstances exist, SGA will consider documentary evidence provided to support the claim, and will keep copies of these documents in the student's file.

Head of College means the most senior staff member for the College (or their delegate). May also be referred to as Centre Director, Principal, or Campus Director.

National Code: The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (and subsequent amendments) which outlines nationally consistent standards for the conduct of registered providers and the registration of their programs

Overseas Student: A person (whether within or outside Australia) who holds a student visa for study in Australia as defined by the ESOS Act.

PRISMS: The Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) is the system used by providers to provide information to the Secretary of DET in connection with an overseas student's course enrolment and course transfer release.

4. Policy

4.1 Requirements for Satisfactory Progress and Course Completion

To maintain satisfactory course progress a student must maintain minimum academic standards and must be able to complete within the specified time limits.

Students must meet the requirements of a course within a prescribed number of months or years from the date of first enrolment. The rationale for placing a timeframe on course completion is to ensure that the qualification awarded reflects currency of knowledge and skill.

The specified time limits or number of years allowed to complete the requirements of a course is listed in the course information provided to the student prior to enrolment.

For instance:

- High School programs usually are 1 year in duration for Junior Secondary (Year 10) and 2 years for Senior Secondary (Years 11 and 12);
- ELICOS programs may vary, for example between 10 – 70 weeks in duration, depending on the program;
- Foundation programs may vary, for example between 30 – 60 weeks in duration, depending on the program;
- Higher education programs may vary, for example between from 1 year for a Diploma, 2 years for an Associate Degree or 3-4 years for a Bachelor degree, depending on the program.

4.2 Exclusion

A student who fails to maintain satisfactory progress or is unable to complete within the specified time limits may be excluded from the course and their enrolment may be terminated. A student whose enrolment has been terminated will be required to reapply for course admission and will be unable to reapply for admission for a period of at least one term.

5. Procedure

5.1 Application for Extension of Time

Students who fail to complete within the specified time limits and who can reasonably be expected to meet the course requirements within two additional terms of study may apply for an extension of time. Each application will be considered on its merits and with reference to the student's academic performance to date. Extension can only be granted on the basis of:

- Compassionate or compelling circumstances (for example illness where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes, or where the Institution was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit); or
- An intervention strategy has been implemented for the student who is at risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress; or
- Deferment or suspension of study due to compassionate or compelling circumstances or student misbehaviour.

Applications for an extension of time to complete the course must be made in writing to the relevant Course Coordinator/Head of Program as soon as the student becomes aware that they are unable to complete the course within the required timeframe. Ideally, this is at least one term prior to the expiry of the student's prescribed period of maximum candidature. The application must include reasons for the student's inability to complete the qualification in the prescribed time period. The Course Coordinator/Head of Program will provide a written response to the student within 20 working days outlining their decision and informing the student of their right to appeal the decision.

5.2 Students who fail to complete within the time limit

Students who fail to complete course requirements within the specified time limit (including any extension of time granted) will have their enrolment terminated and a statement noting that the maximum period of candidature has been exceeded will appear on the final academic transcript issued to the student. The student will be advised in writing of the decision to terminate their enrolment and will also be advised that they have 20 working days from receiving notification of the decision to terminate their enrolment to appeal the decision.

5.3 Requirements to maintain minimum academic standards and students deemed “at risk”

Students are required to attain minimum academic standards. Students do not meet minimum academic standards in a course if they:

- fail a particular unit of study more than once; or
- have not passed 50% or more of the units of study attempted in a term of study.

The relevant Course Coordinator/Head of Program monitors the academic performance of students against the minimum academic standards at the end of each term.

Students who do not meet the minimum academic standards will be deemed to be “at risk”. The relevant Course Coordinator/Head of Program will provide academic counselling to all students who are deemed to be “at risk” and also advise the student of the possibility that conditions may be placed on their enrolment.

During the academic counselling session, the counsellor and the student will determine what additional support will be provided to the student. This may include, but is not limited to, the student:

- attending academic skills programmes;
- attending tutorial or study groups;
- attending at least 80% of scheduled classes in specified units of study;
- receiving individual case management;
- attending counselling;
- receiving assistance with personal issues which are influencing progress;
- receiving mentoring; or
- a combination of the above and a reduction in course load.

A record of the academic counselling session and any additional support to be provided will be signed by the counsellor and the student and placed on the student’s file.

5.4 Students who continue to fail to meet minimum academic standards

If a student continues to fail to meet minimum academic standards after additional support has been provided, the Course Coordinator/Head of Program will request that the student provide a written statement within 20 working days outlining reasons why they should be permitted to continue their enrolment in the course.

The Course Coordinator/Head of Program shall consider the written statement and may:

- terminate the student’s enrolment; or
- permit the student to continue without conditions; or
- permit the student to continue the course with specific conditions.

The Course Coordinator/Head of Program will provide a written statement to the student within 20 working days outlining their decision and informing the student of their right to appeal the decision.

A student who does not submit a written statement by the due date shall have their enrolment terminated.

A student who is permitted to continue their enrolment in the course, but with conditions imposed, who again fails to attain the minimum academic standards or breaches the conditions imposed, will have their enrolment terminated.

5.5 Consequences of exclusion

Students who are excluded due to unsatisfactory academic progress or exceeding the maximum period of candidature and who wish to undertake further study will need to apply to the Institution for admission in line with the *Student Selection and Admissions Policy and Procedure*. A student whose enrolment is terminated due to unsatisfactory academic progress will not be permitted to apply for admission to any SGA higher education course until at least one term of study has elapsed since the termination of their enrolment. Students should provide evidence that the circumstances operating at the time of exclusion no longer apply and/or that they have taken action during the period of exclusion to improve the likelihood of success in the course when applying for readmission.

5.6 Failing a prerequisite unit of study

Course progression rules require that a student who has, in a previous term, failed (and not subsequently passed) the prerequisite for entry to a unit of study cannot be enrolled in that unit of study. However, where a student believes that this rule may adversely affect their course progress they may seek a review of this rule by writing to the relevant Course Coordinator/Head of Program. The Course Coordinator/Head of Program will assess the student's academic record and, if they believe the student has a fair chance of success, they may allow the student to repeat the prerequisite unit of study concurrently with the unit of study for which it is a prerequisite.

5.7 International Students

International students are expected to complete their course in the standard number of terms for a student undertaking a full-time load (the registered course duration).

The relevant Course Coordinator/Head of Program will monitor international students' progress at the end of each term to determine if satisfactory progress is being achieved. Where appropriate, an intervention strategy will be put in place to assist the student to complete their course in the registered course duration. A student's enrolment may be extended where an intervention strategy has been implemented.

Where the Course Coordinator/Head of Program has assessed an international student as not achieving satisfactory course progress as detailed in this policy, they will notify the student in writing of their intention to report them to the Commonwealth Department of Education through PRISMS. The written notice will advise the student that they are able to appeal the decision under the provisions of this policy and that the student has 20 working days in which to do so.

If the student chooses not to appeal or the student's appeal is unsuccessful, the Institution will notify the Commonwealth Department of Education through PRISMS as soon as possible of the student not achieving satisfactory course progress. An international student will not be reported until the grievance process has been exhausted.

5.8 Appeals

A student may appeal against a decision made under this policy. Appeals must be made as prescribed in the appeals process outlined in the College's student complaints/grievances and appeals policy and procedure.

5.9 Graduation

The relevant Course Coordinator/Head of Program/Academic Director (or delegate) will monitor student progression and verify that a student has satisfactorily completed all course requirements and recommend candidates who have successfully completed all required course components to the approving authority for graduation.

Table B: Authority authorised to approve graduation

Course type	Authority authorised to approve graduation
High School	Principal (or authorised delegate)

Foundation courses	Campus Director/Centre Director/Head of College (or authorised delegate)
ELICOS courses	Campus Director/Centre Director/Head of College (or authorised delegate)
Higher Education	Graduands list presented by Campus Director/Centre Director/ Head of College (or authorised delegate) to Academic Board for endorsement and recommendation to Board of Directors (or authorised delegate) for approval and conferral into their entitled awards
Other college issued award (non-AQF)	Principal/Campus Director/Head of College/ Functional Head (or authorised delegate)

Students will be advised in writing of their eligibility to graduate. The student will nominate whether they will attend a graduation ceremony or graduate in absentia by signing and returning the appropriate form.

Students who have an outstanding debt to the Institution shall not be permitted to graduate until such debts have been paid.

6 Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Academic Director (or delegate)

It is the responsibility of the relevant Academic Director (or delegate) to:

- Consider applications for extension of time to complete the course;
- Monitor students' progress and arrange for the provision of academic counselling to students deemed 'at risk';
- Consider applications from students who continue to be deemed 'at risk';
- Consider applications to continue a unit of study having failed the pre-requisite subject;
- For international students, notify students of the intent to report to Commonwealth Department of Education and Training, through PRISMS, for unsatisfactory progress, and notify the Department if the student fails to appeal or the appeal is unsuccessful;
- Verify that students' have met the requirements to graduate and recommend them to Academic Board.

6.2 Counsellor

It is the responsibility of the relevant Counsellor (or delegate) to:

- Provide counselling to student deemed 'at risk' referred by the Course Coordinator/Head of Program;
- Place a signed (by student) record of counselling session and support provided on student's file.

7. Supporting Documents

SGA Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

8. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed at a minimum of once every 5 years by the policy owner (or delegate) to ensure alignment to appropriate strategic direction and its continued relevance to current and planned operations. The next scheduled review of this document is listed in the document history section of this document.

9. Records

All credentials issued by the College and all other records are kept according to statutory requirements, consistent with SGA's Records Management Policy. Confidential documents related to the implementation of the policy will be maintained according to relevant privacy requirements.

10. Related Documents

SGA Student Privacy Policy, SGA Records Management Policy, SGA Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

11. Related Regulations

This policy has been developed in line with requirements set out in the: Education Services for Overseas (ESOS) Act 2000 (and its amendments); National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (the National Code) which complements existing national quality assurance frameworks in education and training including the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards, the English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) Standards 2018, the Foundation Standards (operating adjunct to the National Code), the NSW Education Act and related regulations for NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) registered High Schools, the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), the Tuition Protection Service (TPS), and other Commonwealth and State legislation and regulatory frameworks and standards including the Privacy Act 1988.

Document Approval

Document ID	SGA Student Progression, Exclusion and Graduation Policy and Procedure		
Policy Owner(s)	Head of International Study Centres – ANZ and Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance		
Approved by	SGA Board of Directors	Date Approved	6 September 2018
		Date Commencing	15 September 2018

Document History

Commencing Date	Summary of Changes	Next Review Date
27 March 2015	v7.4 Review, amendment and approval to maintain regulatory and business currency by Academic Board East (ABE) on 5 March 2015 and Academic Board SA & WA on 27 March 2015. Policy note: ABE approval of "Students At Risk (Academic Standing) Policy – Higher Education" applicable to Martin Higher Education on 14-Feb-17 removing Martin College and Martin Higher Education from applicable scope if this policy and procedure.	March 2020
15 September 2018	v8.0 Review and minor amendment to maintain regulatory and business currency. Endorsed by Academic Board (West) 3 September 2018	September 2023

ⁱ References to Foundation courses herein apply only to Foundation courses delivered and awarded by SGA's Taylors College (Perth campus) and Flinders International Student Centre (CRICOS Provider Code 01682E). They do not apply to the University of Sydney Foundation Program (CRICOS Course Code: 022310D) delivered by SGA's Taylors College (Sydney campus) on behalf of the University of Sydney (CRICOS Provider code 00026A).