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## STUDENT ATTENDANCE, COURSE PROGRESS AND INTERVENTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

### 1. PREAMBLE

The College is required to ensure that student course progress is in line with the requirements of the course of study. This includes both academic progress and attendance. Students who are at risk of not making appropriate course progress will be the subject of an Intervention Strategy and a subsequent Study Plan. In developing this Policy, SydneyMet has taken into account the ESOS Act 2000, Standards 8, 9 and 10 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (the National Code), Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) 2013, the Higher Education Standards Framework 2015 and intervention mechanisms used by other higher education providers.

### 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to provide a framework for staff dealing with international students to ensure students are monitored for course progress and attendance and that a suitable and timely Intervention Strategy is applied and that the student is supported and monitored to ensure compliance with the course progress requirements.

### 3. SCOPE

The scope of this policy applies to all students accepted by the College.

### 4. COURSE PROGRESS

- 4.1 The College takes student progress seriously given its central role in ensuring students achieve consistent progress in their study. Course Progress is assessed using the final results for all Units studied to date and progress in Units in which the student is currently enrolled.
- 4.2 Satisfactory course progress is achieved when a student meets the following minimum academic requirements:
- not fail 50% or more of the Units attempted in two consecutive trimesters, and/ or
  - no more than two failed attempts at a particular Unit.

- 4.6 A student is identified as a student at risk if the student fails to demonstrate satisfactory course progress as described above, regardless of the reasons.

## **5. ATTENDANCE**

- 5.1 SydneyMet monitors student academic progress to identify Students at Risk. It is SydneyMet policy that a student should maintain an 80% attendance rate to maximise their ability to achieve satisfactory course progress.
- 5.2 SydneyMet records and monitors attendance and performs a routine attendance check in each trimester. Students with less than 80% attendance are contacted via email, to remind them of their study obligations. Students with less than 80% attendance, or who continue to demonstrate poor attendance will be required to attend an interview with a designated Academic Support Officer (ASO) to discuss the situation and, if required, undertake a program of assistance under the Intervention Strategy.

## **6. COMPLETION OF ASSESSMENTS**

- 6.1 Assessment marks during the trimester are monitored by the Dean. In the event that the Dean identifies a student who is having difficulties in submitting assessments tasks on time, or is performing poorly, they may discuss the situation with the student in an attempt to resolve any issues, identify support that is available, assist the student with study recommendations, and/or refer the student to the Learning Centre. Students who do not submit an assessment task may be contacted by an Academic Support Officer (ASO) to discuss assistance under the Intervention Strategy.
- 6.2 All results are examined after final grades are published at the end of each trimester, and students who have a) failed more than 50% of the Units studied, and/ or b) no more than one failure in a particular unit, are identified as Students at Risk and referred to Academic Support Officer (ASO) to commence the Intervention Strategy.

## **7. IDENTIFYING STUDENTS AT RISK**

- 7.1 The Dean monitors the academic performance of each student against the minimum academic standards at the end of each trimester.
- 7.2 The Dean is responsible to identify students at risk. Where a student has failed to meet the minimum academic standards, the Dean will deem that student as being 'at risk'.
- 7.3 'At risk' refers to a student's ability to maintain satisfactory course progress in order to complete their course within the duration of their eCoE (international students) or within the maximum period of enrolment (all students) which is 9 years.

## **8. INTERVENTION STRATEGY**

- 8.1 The Intervention Strategy starts when students are identified as 'at risk'. In the case of an international student, unsatisfactory course progress may result in the risk of students being

unable to complete their course in the duration specified in their eCoE.

- 8.2 Initiating intervention will normally be the responsibility of the Dean. Students deemed 'at risk' will be notified by the Dean. This contact should happen within one week of the student being deemed 'at risk'.
- 8.3 The Dean will at the same time refer the student to the Academic Support Officer (ASO) for review and reporting. The ASO, will arrange a meeting with the student and organise a Study Plan for the student. This meeting should occur within 1 week of the referral being made.
- 8.4 At the meeting, ASO will discuss the course, its learning outcomes, its future subjects and be candid about the direction of the course versus the student's own goals and if they have changed.

In most cases, a Study Plan will be discussed and agreed with the student and signed by both the student and the ASO or the authorised College officer, including conditions which must be met by the student. This step is taken if it is ascertained that the course goals, direction and future Units continue to be aligned with the student's goals and future direction. All documents, records of interview etc., are added to student files.

- a. The Study Plan will outline specific steps to be taken by the student and those that the College will do to improve student performance and re-align it to the course progress requirements.
- b. The Study Plan will be implemented and monitored for progress. This may lead to regular meetings with ASO or other authorised College officer. The ASO, in consultation with Dean, may take the following actions:
  - Require the student to attend the Learning Centre, or other support sessions, at no additional cost to the student.
  - Require the student to meet regularly with the ASO, or nominee, to discuss ongoing progress as outlined in the Study Plan– the student may be required to demonstrate progress work on assessments at these meetings.
  - Where the reason for at risk status is medical, SydneyMet will consult and liaise, with the student's consent, with appropriate medical persons and/or organisations such as the student's doctor or specialists. This is done under conditions of strict confidentiality.
  - The student may have to attend compulsory classes or undertake homework or other activities to enable them to return to acceptable course progress levels. This may also include completing a declaration regarding course attendance.
  - Some of the ways in which the College may support the student when undertaking an Intervention Strategy are: Counselling, Attending extra tutorials, Attending one on one sessions with a lecturer or tutor, Attending additional group classes, Attending a Peer Student Support (PSS) session (see below), Appointment of a student mentor, Attending language support sessions, Completing a declaration of attendance reform, Agreeing to specific Study Plan, Agreeing to specific study achievement milestones, and Other academic measures as deemed necessary by the College.

- a combination of the above and a reduction in course load.

- 8.4 Should the student be unwilling to meet or cooperate with this process within one week of the ASO contacting them,
- a. the student is sent a formal email, to the last provided email address, outlining reasons why they were deemed 'at risk', requiring a reply within 1 week.
  - b. If no response is received within 1 week, the matter is referred to Dean for resolution and appropriate action. For international students, this may include referral to the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) for a review of the student's visa status, and may include exclusion from SydneyMet, and cancellation of their eCoE, with notification to via PRISMS.
  - c. The student will be advised of this intention by email to the last email address provided to SydneyMet, with an explanation of the circumstances. The student will be advised to seek advice from DHA on the potential impact on their student visa. The student will also be notified of their right to appeal within 20 working days under the SydneyMet appeals process.
  - d. If the student appeals, the appeals process is implemented. If the student does not respond or appeal, at the end of the 20 working day period a report to DHA is made.
- 8.5 When counselling students at risk, special consideration will be given to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to support them to progress and complete their course.
- 8.6 The Dean and ASO will conduct a review of the student's progress in light of intervention strategies after 4 weeks. This may involve checking on assessment results, contacting lecturers, or meeting again with the student to assess progress.
- 8.7 Students at risk who improve their performance, and meet the requirements for satisfactory course progress, are removed from the Students at Risk Register. Students may, if they wish, continue to seek support and assistance as available to continue improvement in their progress.
- 8.8 Students who do not improve their performance, and fail to reach satisfactory course progress, by a) Failing more than 50% of the subjects studied for two consecutive trimesters, and/or b) more than two failed attempts at a particular Unit , and c) Failing to satisfy the conditions of the Study Plan or other agreed intervention strategy are identified as making unsatisfactory course progress and may be escalated further including reporting the student to the DHA as required by law.

## **9. STUDY PLAN COPIES**

A copy of the Study Plan used in the Intervention Strategy will be maintained by the College on student file for future reference should a new case of Intervention be required. The student is alerted to the fact that not making satisfactory course progress is a serious matter and may lead to the reporting of the student, by the College, to the DHA.

## **10. INTENT TO REPORT NOTICE**

Should the student not make satisfactory course progress after the Intervention Strategy is implemented, the College will send the student a written notice of intention to report the student to the DHA for failure to make course progress. The letter to the student will contain information on accessing the appeals process. If the student believes that they have been treated unfairly, they may make an appeal through the Complaints and Grievances system at the College.

For international students, SydneyMet is obliged by Standard 8 of the National Code to notify the student of SydneyMet's intention to report for not achieving satisfactory course progress. The process is as follows:

- The student is issued with an Intention to Report letter. As stated in the Intention to Report letter, the student has access to both internal and external appeal processes.
- Students wishing to appeal must notify the College of this intention within 20 working days of receipt of the Intention to Report letter.
- SydneyMet informs the overseas student of the need to seek advice from DHA or other sources on the potential impact on his or her student visa.
- SydneyMet will not report any international student formally to DHA until the student has no further avenues of internal appeal at SydneyMet, or 20 working days have elapsed and no appeal has been lodged..
- For domestic students SydneyMet will notify the student of an intention to exclude, and follow a similar notification and appeal process as per the Complaints and Appeals Policy.
- Only once all internal avenues of appeal have been exhausted, will SydneyMet exclude a domestic student, or report an international student's enrolment as cancelled via PRISMS. All relevant documentation is placed on the student's file.

## **11. STUDENT WELFARE**

Student life is not always easy, and the College recognises various pressures that students face. The College has a full time Student Counsellor who is available on campus every day of the week. This professional can help students with personal matters that may affect their studies or well-being in general. These may include, but are not limited to, relationships, family issues, financial concerns, health concerns or simply feeling home sick. Students can speak to with the counsellor early on if they are facing personal challenges. The service is confidential, and the counsellor is able to liaise with academic staff and with the Academic Support Officer on your behalf, should this be required. The College has Student Services Officer, who can also provide help or information to students to manage their daily lives like information on accommodation, transportation, or other emergency matters. The counsellor's details are shown in the "College Team" section of this handbook.

## **12. PEER SUPPORT**

The College has a peer support system that encourages and rewards students who are academically competent to assist their colleagues through support classes, subject matter assistance and assignment support. This peer support is not a replacement for the Academic Support Officer or your lecturer or tutor but is intended to provide a further avenue for students

to explore by working with their academically capable peers. These peers are referred to as Peer Support Students (PSS). PSS applications are available from the College for students wishing to enlist to assist their peers. PSS activities are paid by way of an honorarium to the PSS and the College provides classroom facilities at no cost.

PSS sessions are advertised in advance via the notice board and also in Moodle, and PSS members are expected to uphold professional standards and run useful sessions that are viable and take the subject matter seriously. PSS sessions are not a replacement for the student completing their own work and managing their own assignments. It is intended to provide academic peer support and some guidance.

Concerns over a PSS program can be relayed to the Academic Support Officer.

### **13. RECORDING, REPORTING AND MONITORING OF INTERVENTIONS**

The ASO is responsible to keep records of all referrals of students for unsatisfactory progress, including details of the Intervention process implemented and its outcomes.

### **14. INSTITUTIONAL APPROACH FOR MONITORING COURSE PROGRESS**

SydneyMet employs an institutional approach to monitor course progress. The Dean monitors student progress. The Dean is responsible to submit a quarterly report on students' course progress and intervention strategies to the Academic Board. The Academic Board is responsible to monitor student course progress, ensuring that relevant policies and procedures are being followed, and reporting this on to the Governing Council.

### **14. PRIVACY**

SydneyMet will maintain the confidentiality and privacy of student information. However, information collected from students may, as required in accordance with the Higher Education Support (HES) Act 2003 and other legislation be provided to the Department of Education, Department of Home Affairs and Commonwealth, State or Territory Government agencies. SydneyMet is bound by the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) under the Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012, and the Privacy Act 1988 with respect to the collection, use and disclosure of personal information.

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