

Academic Progress Policy

The Newcastle International College has established and published policies. These policies are reviewed periodically, and student's relying upon any of these policies to support or guide their studies should refer to the College's website (<https://www.nic.nsw.edu.au/>) for the most current and up to date version.

OVERVIEW

This policy was approved by the Academic Board in October 2019 and supersedes all previously published Newcastle International College's academic (course) progress policies.

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

The policy establishes the criteria and processes used to determine satisfactory academic progress, and is consistent with the:

- *Education Services and Overseas Students Act 2000* (ESOS Act);
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (<https://internationaleducation.gov.au/>);
- *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA); and
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 Standard 1.3 Orientation and Progression.

NIC continually monitors students' academic progress throughout each study period to ascertain the achievement of academic requirements detailed in the module outline for that module. For the purpose of this policy document, free support activities are not counted as enrolled modules.

Monitoring student academic progress allows for identification of students who might be at risk of not completing their program within the time frame of their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) and allows for intervention strategies to be implemented. This policy also provides students with an opportunity to overcome any academic or personal obstacles affecting academic progress.

SCOPE

The policy applies to all students enrolled in programs at all campuses of the Newcastle International College (NIC).

POLICY

This policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- NIC recognizes that students come from diverse cultures and backgrounds with differing motivation and learning needs.
- NIC encourages students to take responsibility for their learning and to take advantage of any academic and personal assistance that is available to them at NIC.
- NIC seeks to identify and support students who require extra assistance and intervention strategies to maximize their chances of satisfactory academic progress into further higher education.
- Students are provided an opportunity to explain the reason/s for unsatisfactory academic progress.
- Students excluded on the grounds of unsatisfactory academic progress, are provided the opportunity to appeal through internal and external appeals processes.
- NIC is obliged to report overseas students with unsatisfactory academic performance and attendance levels. Warnings will outline support mechanisms available and be accompanied by an invitation for the student to seek academic and/or welfare assistance.

1. Satisfactory Academic Progress

- 1.1 Academic progress is assessed on the basis of a student's performance in a study period, it also takes into account a student's overall performance to date in the program in which the student is currently enrolled.
- 1.2 Students are deemed to be making satisfactory academic progress if they pass at least 50% of their enrolled modules in a study period.
- 1.3 Students who fail more than 50% of their modules in a study period are not considered to be making satisfactory academic progress and will be placed on Conditional Academic Status and/or an academic management plan.
- 1.4 Students who are making satisfactory academic progress are identified as students with satisfactory academic progress and are permitted to continue in their program and re-enrol.

2. Progress Monitoring

- 2.1 As NIC aims to identify at risk students (or those experiencing difficulties) as early as possible and at any stage of a student's enrolment, NIC has adopted a number of monitoring strategies to assist with this, including, but not limited to:
 - 2.1.1 Monitoring academic performance in coordination with attendance levels, as academic performance is often impacted by poor attendance (refer to NIC's Attendance Policy - <https://www.nic.nsw.edu.au/>).
 - 2.1.2 Teaching staff progressively monitor and assess the academic progress of each student during a given study period and report back to the NIC Student and Academic Services (SAS) Team via the Students at Risk Register. This provides NIC an opportunity to follow up with students and assist in offering the relevant academic or wellbeing support.
 - 2.1.3 NIC may also utilise a Student Incident Report to identify students who have missed an assessment or have very poor attendance. These students may be communicated with immediately to warn them that NIC believes they may be at risk of not achieving satisfactory academic progress.
 - 2.1.4 At the end of each study period, following the finalisation of all assessment results, NIC will identify students who have not passed at least 50% of enrolled modules and will commence its intervention strategies to assist these students. These students will be placed on a progressive three step conditional enrolment and/or individualised academic management plan. The terms of intervention will vary according to which level of Conditional Academic Status the student is currently placed.

3. Progress Assessment

- 3.1 Academic progress is assessed on the basis of a student's performance in the last study period, and takes into account their overall performance to date in the program in which they are currently enrolled.
- 3.2 Students are deemed to be making satisfactory academic progress if they pass at least 50% of their enrolled modules in a study period.
- 3.3 Students who fail 50% or more of their enrolled modules in a study period are not considered to be making satisfactory academic progress and are placed on Conditional Academic Status.
- 3.4 Students placed on Conditional Academic Status and/or an academic management plan are provided with intervention strategies as deemed necessary to assist them in making satisfactory academic progress. They are required to adhere to the standards and instructions pertaining to these strategies as part of improving their academic progress.

3.5 Students placed on Conditional Academic Status 3 and an agreed academic management plan are required to participate in, and abide by the intervention strategies specified for them as part of NIC's measures in aiding the student to achieve satisfactory academic progress.

3.5.1 Students placed on Conditional Academic Status 3 "Condition 3" **and** an academic management plan, are advised that this is actually a final warning and that failure to comply with the strategies and conditions put in place to assist them, will result in termination of their academic status and enrolment with NIC.

3.6 Students who have been identified for placement on Conditional Academic Status and/or academic management plan will be contacted by the NIC SAS Team in order to commence discussions and determine a relevant plan of action. These students will also be monitored and contacted throughout the study period should this be considered necessary by the SAS Team.

4. Progress Rules and Post-Assessment Intervention Strategies

4.1 Defining Academic Status

Good Standing	The student is achieving satisfactory academic progress and is permitted to continue in the program or has changed to a new program voluntarily or following the recommendations of the NIC Examination Committee.
Academic Management Plan	The student has been identified as at risk of not achieving satisfactory academic progress and an academic management plan is then agreed between the student and NIC. The academic management plan is specific to the particular student and will provide intervention strategies particular to that student in order to assist them to achieve satisfactory academic progress and program completion.
Conditional Academic Status (Condition 1 or Condition 2)	The student is at risk of not achieving satisfactory academic progress but is permitted to continue in the program and to re-enrol, as per the criteria for determining academic status in this policy document.
Conditional Academic Status (Condition 3) with an academic management plan	Students who are or who have previously been on Condition 2 and who do not pass at least 50% of enrolled modules will be placed on a Condition 3 (final warning) and an academic management plan. All students placed on Condition 3 and an academic management plan will effectively remain on this academic status level until the completion of their studies at NIC or until their enrolment is terminated.
Terminated Status	The student has not achieved satisfactory academic progress and is terminated from NIC. The student is not permitted to continue in the program or to change program without formal approval from NIC. Overseas students who are on terminated status will be in 'default' of meeting their Student Visa Condition 8202 'Achieving Satisfactory Course Progress'. NIC will carry out its regulatory requirements and report these students as required under law.

4.2 Criteria for determining academic status

Criteria- If any of the following occur	Current or highest previous academic status	Next study period status
Student fails more than 50% of their enrolled modules in a study period	Good Standing	Conditional Status 1
Student fails more than 50% of their enrolled modules in a study periods	Conditional Status 1	Conditional Status 2
Student fails more than 50% of their enrolled modules in a study period	Conditional Status 2	Conditional Status 3 AND academic management plan
Student fails more than 50% of their enrolled modules in a study period	Conditional Status 3 and academic management plan	Terminated
Student fails 100% of their enrolled modules in a study period	Good Standing OR Conditional Status 1 OR Conditional Status 2	Conditional Status 3 AND academic management plan
Student fails 100% of their enrolled modules in a study period	Conditional Status 3 AND academic management plan	Terminated
Student fails a module twice	Good Standing OR Conditional Status 1	Conditional Status 2
Student fails a module three times	Good Standing OR Conditional Status 1 OR Conditional Status 2	Terminated
Student passes all modules in a study period	Conditional Status 1	Good Standing
Student passes more than 50% of enrolled modules in a study period	Conditional Status 1	Remains Conditional Status 1
Student passes more than 50% of enrolled modules OR passes all modules in a study period	Conditional Status 2	Remains Conditional Status 2
Student changes course following a recommendation by the NIC Examination Committee	Any	Good Standing
Student passes more than 50% of enrolled modules OR passes all modules in a study period	Conditional Status 3 AND academic management plan	Remains on Conditional Status 3 AND academic management plan

4.3 Conditions Associated with Academic Status

Condition/Student Requirement	Condition 1	Condition 2	Condition 3 & academic management plan	Terminated
You must make an appointment to speak with the SAS Team if your enrolment has been blocked. This is a compulsory meeting and must be completed before the closing date of enrolment	Yes	Yes	Yes	
You are to be placed on conditional enrolment and the number of modules you are permitted to enrol in will be limited	Yes	Yes	Yes	
You are required to complete support programs/task/workshops	Yes	Yes	Yes	
You are required to maintain a level of 80% attendance	Yes	Yes	Yes – unless otherwise stated in an academic management plan	
You are required to complete all assessment tasks as stated in each study module outline	Yes	Yes	Yes	
You are required to pass a minimum of 50% of enrolled study modules in the current study period	Yes	Yes	Yes – unless otherwise stated in an academic management plan	
You must meet with a member of the SAS Team to discuss your academic progress as requested	Yes	Yes	Yes	
You must comply with any other further conditions placed upon your enrolment – including greater than 80% attendance and better than 50% pass rates for study modules			Yes	
Enrolment is blocked pending meeting with the SAS Team to discuss further enrolment whilst undergoing appeal process				Yes

Enrolment blocked due to unsuccessful outcome of appeal process				Yes
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5. Procedure for Intervention

- 5.1 Students who do not pass at least 50% of enrolled modules in a study period will be placed on Conditional Academic Status for the subsequent study period.
- 5.2 Students will be aware that upon receiving their results from a given study period, that failing 50% or more of their enrolled modules will result in being placed on Conditional Academic Status.
- 5.3 Students requiring placement on Conditional Academic Status will have their online enrolment blocked until they have made an appointment to have an interview with the SAS Team.
 - 5.3.1 During the course of the interview students are given the opportunity to outline any Compassionate or Compelling circumstances that have contributed to their unsatisfactory academic progress.
 - 5.3.2 Notes will be made and recorded in the student's file within the student management system concerning the content of the interview.
 - 5.3.3 At this time, the student will be placed on Conditional Academic Status in line with the criteria stated above in table 4.2.
- 5.4 The SAS Team are available to assist any students on a Conditional Academic Status and students are encouraged to use this service by making an appointment either in person at the NIC office or via email to student.services@nic.nsw.edu.au.

6. Early Intervention Strategies

- 6.1 NIC aims to identify at risk students during various stages of their enrolment to ensure that any signs of difficulty are identified early.
 - 6.1.1 NIC may utilise a Student Incident Report to identify students who have missed an assessment or have very poor attendance. A warning will be sent to any student that NIC believes to be at risk.
 - 6.1.2 During a study period, NIC monitors each student's academic performance and attendance levels. NIC has built into every module an early assessment task to provide students and staff an opportunity to assess learning to date and provide time to address any issues. Students identified as having performed poorly in the early assessment task will be contacted to discuss strategies for improvement.
- 6.2 Teaching staff and program coordinators are required to help identify students they deem to be at risk of failing, and to identify any actions that have been taken to assist these students.
- 6.3 Students who have been offered a fast-track enrolment (only requiring two study periods to complete their program, four modules per study period) will be advised during orientation that, requests to reduce their study load to three modules (as opposed to four), will require application to withdraw from one module and approval will be determined by College Management on a case by case basis.
 - 6.3.1 Students have up to the end of Week four of a study period (i.e. census date) to withdraw from a module without financial or academic penalty.
 - 6.3.2 Students who are on fast-track enrolment and arrive late for the start of a study period will be required to meet with the SAS Team and may be required to undertake a reduced study load. Students are considered late if they have arrived after the end of week one of any given study period.

7. Review of Academic Status

- 7.1 Students placed on Conditional Academic Status and/or an academic management plan will undergo review of their status at the end of the relevant study period.
- 7.2 Students will be assessed to determine whether they have:
 - (a) achieved satisfactory academic progress and have therefore successfully completed their program; or
 - (b) achieved satisfactory academic progress in the study period and will be given the opportunity to enrol in subsequent study periods.
- 7.3 Whether a student has achieved satisfactory academic progress will be assessed as outlined in part 3 of this policy document - Progress Assessment.
- 7.4 A student's academic status may be varied due to successful academic progress as outlined in this policy document in table 4.2 (Criteria for determining academic status).

8. Intervention strategies to assist students

- Attendance at Study Skills support workshop
- Attendance at relevant help tutorials
- Attendance at English Conversation classes
- Consultation hours with respective lecturers and tutors
- Lunchtime workshops (where applicable)
- Limited enrolment load in subsequent study period as directed
- Academic and welfare guidance
- Mentor/student led study group sessions
- Extending a student's CoE – allowing a window of opportunity for academic progress if required

9. Termination of Academic Status

It is considered a "final warning" when a student is placed on Conditional Academic Status "Condition 3" as well as an academic management plan. Students placed on this type of final warning will remain on this Conditional Academic Status until completion of their studies at NIC, or up to the time their enrolment is terminated.

Failure to comply with the conditions set out for students placed on Condition 3 and an academic management plan, particularly the failure to pass at least 50% of enrolled modules in the relevant study period (Condition 3) or as directed in the student's academic management plan, will result in termination of the students' academic status and enrolment with NIC.

The student will be informed in writing (typically via the email account provided by the student to NIC) that their enrolment has been terminated.

At this time, the student will be entitled to pursue the appeals process as stated below in part 10 of this policy document.

10. Appealing Terminated Academic Status

- 10.1 Students are entitled to appeal a decision under this policy. Formal appeal applications are to be made in writing, with supporting documentation, and be submitted to NIC Student Services within twenty (20) working days from the date of NIC's written notice of intention to report being communicated to the student.
- 10.2 Upon receipt of a complete written formal appeal application (that which includes all attachments and supporting documentation), the SAS Team will convene the NIC

Appeals Committee to review the application. A decision will be communicated in writing to the student within ten (10) working days after a complete formal appeal application is received by the SAS Team.

- 10.3 Where a student is informed that their appeal is unsuccessful, the student will then have ten (10) working days in which to inform NIC as to whether they have submitted an external appeal to the Overseas Student Ombudsman (refer to NIC Appeals Policy on website - <https://www.nic.nsw.edu.au/>.)
- 10.4 Student's whose appeal is unsuccessful and do not seek external appeal, will be reported in the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) and advised to seek and follow the advice of Immigration at the Department of Home Affairs concerning the status of their student visa.
- 10.5 For students who elect not to access the appeals process (neither the internal nor external appeals processes) the result will remain the same, i.e. that the student's academic status and enrolment with NIC is terminated. NIC will advise the student in writing of their terminated academic status, and that they will be reported in PRISMS. The student will be advised the student to seek and follow the advice of Immigration at the Department of Home Affairs concerning the status of their student visa.

11. Readmission after Termination

- 11.1 A student whose academic status and enrolment is terminated on the grounds of failure to achieve satisfactory academic progress, may apply, after one year, for readmission to NIC.
 - 11.1.1 This application must be made at least four weeks prior to the commencement of the relevant study period in which the student seeks to resume study.
- 11.2 A student who has previously failed to achieve satisfactory academic progress resulting in termination of academic status and enrolment with NIC, may also apply for admission into a new program of study.
- 11.3 A student applying to enroll in a new program of study will need to apply to NIC with a complete application. In these circumstances, the student must provide NIC with documentary evidence that they have complied with the conditions placed on their original student visa during the period of exclusion from NIC.
- 11.4 Any application for readmission by a student whose academic status and enrolment has previously been terminated will be assessed by the College Director and Principal.
 - 11.4.1 To be satisfied that the student has a reasonable chance of succeeding in the chosen program of study and has not breached their visa conditions, the College Director and Principal will consider factors such as, but not limited to the following:
 - changed/varied circumstances
 - academic and/or vocational performance since termination of previous enrolment
 - maturity
 - current motivating factors in wanting to study again
 - current motivating factors in wanting to study something new
 - 11.4.2 In circumstances where a student has been readmitted to the College, the student may be placed on any Conditional Academic Status and/or academic management plan. This will be at the discretion of the College Director and Principal and will be managed on a case by case basis as deemed necessary to aid in the student's success.
- 11.5 An application for readmission following termination of academic status and enrolment with NIC will not automatically be approved. Where such an application is not approved by the College Director and Principal, the decision is final.

DEFINITIONS

Key Term or Acronym	Definition
academic management plan	<p>A document agreed and signed by the student and NIC that states specific requirements in order for the student to achieve satisfactory academic progress as required by NIC.</p> <p>This document is specific to the student. It can address more than academic progress, and can include numerous intervention strategies as it is utilised as a method to aid a student to achieve academic progress and program completion.</p>
academic progress	The measure of advancement within a program of study towards its completion.
appeal	A complete, formal written submission by a student for review of a decision made by NIC of an academic or non-academic nature.
at risk	A student who has been identified (through monitoring procedures) and appears likely to fail, or has failed, two or more subjects in a given study period.
Compassionate or Compelling circumstances	<p>Circumstances beyond the control of the student which have an impact upon the student's academic progress, attendance or wellbeing.</p> <p>Please refer to Special Consideration Policy for further details.</p>
Conditional Academic Status	A student has been identified as being at risk of not achieving satisfactory academic progress, however, the student has been permitted to continue in the program and to re-enrol, as per the criteria for determining academic status in this policy document.
conditional enrolment	<p>Conditional enrolment occurs when a student has been identified as being unable to achieve satisfactory academic progress in the previous study period, and has been placed on Conditional Academic Status in accordance with this policy document.</p> <p>The student must comply with the conditions set out as part of their Conditional Academic Status and/or their individual academic management plan as agreed between the student and NIC. The consequences of failing to comply with the specific conditions placed upon their enrolment will result in the consequences mapped out in this policy document.</p>
Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)	A document registered with the Australian Government confirming an overseas student's acceptance into a program for a specified duration.

ESOS Act 2000	The <i>Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000</i> . This Act regulates the delivery of education services to overseas students.
module/s	A single subject of study that contributes to the student's overall program of instruction, the culmination of which will lead to finalisation of the student's studies in that program.
National Code 2018	The National Code of Practice for Registered Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007. Established under section 33 of the ESOS Act 2000. The National Code 2018 provides nationally consistent standards and procedures for providers who deliver educational services to overseas students.
NIC	Newcastle International College. Based at the University of Newcastle campuses.
NIC Appeals Committee	The final appeals body at NIC which considers formal appeal applications from students against decisions of NIC whether of an academic or non-academic nature.
overseas student	A non-domestic temporary resident student on an Australian Student Visa.
Overseas Student Ombudsman	An Australian Government agency which receives and investigates complaints from overseas students about actions and decisions of private education providers.
PRISMS	Provider Registration and International Student Management System. A database developed by the Australian Federal Government for the purpose of compliance with the ESOS Act.
program	A scheduled plan of instruction that in its entirety leads to an award of the institution.
SAS Team	Student and Academic Services Team
satisfactory academic progress	Students are deemed to be making satisfactory academic progress if they pass at least 50% of their enrolled modules in a study period, or adhere to the standard set for them within their individual academic management plan.
scheduled contact hours	Timetabled Activity/ies relating to modules in which a student has registered for a given study period.

Student Incident Report	A report submitted to NIC, either by NIC teaching or support staff, concerning a particular student and their involvement in a particular incident. This can include anything of particular concern, including; failure to submit an assessment, failure to attend class, any wellbeing concerns etc. This report is reviewed by the NIC College Director and Principal and further action and consultation with the relevant student is taken where necessary.
Students at Risk Register	<p>NIC's internal register documenting students that have been identified as potentially at risk of not meeting satisfactory academic progress. The information in this register is sourced from teaching staff, program coordinators and the SAS Team.</p> <p>The information in this register is discussed and monitored between the College Director and Principal, the Academic Director and the SAS Team to action any intervention strategies and meetings with students to discuss their academic progress.</p>
study period	Defined periods of scheduled contact hours for NIC students. Each study period is of a 13-week duration and excludes study breaks and examination periods.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Grievance/Appeal form
- Attendance Policy
- Special Consideration Policy
- Appeals Policy
- ESOS Act 2000
- National Code 2018
- HESA 2003
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015

Status and Amendment Details

Department:	Academic	
Approval Authority:	Academic Board	
Approval Date:	October 2019	
Date for Next Review:	October 2022	
Revision Date	Version	Summary of changes
16/02/2011	1	Document developed and implemented.
24/09/2012	2	Document updated to reflect current UPD formatting.
07/11/2012	3	All references to DEEWR replaced with DIISRTE.
26/03/2014	4	All references to DIAC replaced with DIBP
18/08/2014	5	Policy updated and reviewed
11/10/2019	6	Policy updated to reflect latest legislative and regulatory amendments. Amended to further College's compliance with visa condition 8202 that a student 'Achieving Satisfactory Course Progress', particularly the requirement of satisfactory progress.