

Academic Progress and Student At-Risk Policy and Procedure

Supporting plans, policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure • Admissions and Enrolment Policy and Procedure • Student Wellbeing and Support Policy and Procedure • Equity, Diversity and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Framework and Policy • Conferral of Awards and Graduation and Academic Documentation Policy • Assessment and Moderation Policy and Procedure • Records and Information Management Policy and Procedure • Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure • Credit and RPL Policy and Procedure • Risk Management Policy • Learning and Teaching Plan • Student Handbook • Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure • Student Orientation Policy and Procedure
Related legislation and references	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 • Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2011 • National Code 2018, Part B: Standard 8
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Document review	This document is to be reviewed every two-years at a minimum from the date of final approval.

Version	Review Date and Person/Body	Notes
0.1	Draft prepared by LTC	
0.2	Reviewed by Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) on 5 May 2020	
0.3	Reviewed and approved by Academic Board on 19 May 2020	Approval was subject to the changes raised in the AB meeting to be incorporated – refer to the AB meeting minutes for details
1.0	Final document provided to Academic Board on 16 June 2020 after changes have been incorporated	
1.1	Approved by Academic Board 20 October 2020	Updated based on internal and external review
2.0	Reviewed and approved by the Academic Board via email circulation on 23 July 2021	Updates made following the response to the TEQSA Request for Information 23 July 2021
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3.0	Reviewed and approved by the Academic Board on 14 June 2022	Updates made following the response to the TEQSA Request for Information (REQ06238)

Background and Scope

This document details how MIHE manages the academic progression of students and how students at-risk of unsatisfactory progress are identified, managed, monitored and supported.

Pursuant to the Higher Education Standards Framework rates of retention, progression and completion of student cohorts through courses of study are monitored to enable review and improvement. This policy and its procedures apply to all domestic and international students at MIHE and all academic and administrative staff associated with teaching and learning and administration of their courses.

MIHE is aware of the significant transitional challenges facing first year students particularly and acknowledges the diversity and changing social and educational needs and an expectation of its new students' cohorts. MIHE commits to a positive and engaging First Year Experience (FYE), which connects new learners with their academic staff and professional staff, and peers in a community committed to learning success and career attainment, and enhances student satisfaction, a positive learning and course experience, and retention. MIHE recognises that not all students who enrol in a course will find that it suits their needs, interests and abilities. Where students are motivated to complete their course, MIHE is dedicated to offering the teaching, materials and support they need to succeed.

At MIHE, the successful transition of students, and retention of students is the responsibility of all staff. MIHE focuses on providing the best possible positive learning experience for new students in an environment where they are supported to take responsibility for their own learning, and to embrace an active role in succeeding to their full potential (academically and personally) as new learners in the MIHE.

MIHE also recognises that academic progression issues may arise later in a course, due to students' changing circumstances.

A proactive intervention strategy and procedure for all students identified as being at risk of unsatisfactory course progress is provided below.

Definitions

ESL	English as a Second Language
EMT	English as a Mother Tongue

Also, refer to Glossary of Terms.

Policy

The following principles form the basis of this policy:

Early assessment of progress	In the early stages of any unit or the course, MIHE will include a first assessment aimed at identifying students who are likely to have problems with their academic work. In the first instance, unit co-ordinators are expected to contact students who are identified as having problems with their academic work in order to ascertain the nature of the problems they are experiencing and how they could be assisted to improve their performance. MIHE will make available additional support to students, such as learning and counselling support, including having the Student Welfare and Support Officer provide extra support, as required.
Proactive Monitoring and Prevention and Review	MIHE will monitor and report on student's' progression at the end of each semester. Cohorts will be tracked in terms of gender, level of study, indigenous/non-indigenous, full time/part time enrolment, domestic /international, under 24/over 25, ESL/EMT, disability reported/no disability reported, first in family/not first in family, low/medium/high socioeconomic status in order to determine those groups likely to be at risk and to determine appropriate intervention strategies.
Academic empowerment	Students will have access to their academic record upon making a request so that they are empowered to make decisions about their academic progress. Students will have access to this policy so that they have a clear understanding of relevant requirements and procedures.
Clear expectations	MIHE will make clear on its website, in the <i>Student Handbook</i> and Unit Outlines and student orientation what is expected of students when completing assessments and what constitutes satisfactory progress. This will also be reinforced in each of the classes and supported by the Student Welfare and Support Officer as required.
Compassionate support	MIHE acknowledges that unsatisfactory progress can be very difficult for students. While scrupulously maintaining academic standards, MIHE will ensure that students have no cost supports available to them.
Completion	MIHE aims to have all students who enrol complete the full Course in the minimum time.
Fair	Fair and consistent treatment should be provided to all students by the processes and procedures of this Policy and Procedure. MIHE will notify relevant students of satisfactory performance in a timely manner.
Recruitment	MIHE will endeavour to ensure that each student recruited into a course will have a realistic chance of completion.
Transparency	Students will be able to access their own academic records and to be able to access this Policy and Procedure.

Document Review

Cohort data is collected in the Student Management System (Wisenet) during admission and is updated on a regular basis, including when students become 'at risk'. All policies and procedures are reviewed at a minimum of every two years. Prior to review, cohort data will be extracted from the Student Management System to inform improvements in MIHE policies and procedures, if required.

Procedure

Student Orientation and Progression

Before students formally commence their studies at MIHE, they are required to complete student orientation that is tailored to the needs of the student cohorts, including specific consideration for international students adjusting to living and studying in Australia. As part of the student orientation program, students will be provided with details of the learning support services available to them which are consistent with the requirements of their course of study and their learning needs, such as English language support, personal support services, cultural support and ancillary services, hours of availability, how to access services and emergency contact details where applicable.

Satisfactory Course Progress
A student's academic/course progress will be assessed using the results of their units studied for a semester. At the end of each semester, students deemed to have satisfactory course progress will have passed 50% or more of the units attempted in each semester and not failed any unit of study more than once.

Unsatisfactory Course Progression

This arises when a student at risk:

1. Fails 50% or more of the Units attempted at the end of a semester.
2. Fails the same Unit for a second time.
3. Obtains a Grade Point Average (GPA) below a pass grade.
4. Is unable to complete their course within the timeframe specified in their *CoE* (for international students), or the maximum time for enrolment (for domestic students). In such circumstances, the student will be informed about the repercussions to their study schedule and the student visa (international students only). The student will be referred to the Student Welfare and Support Officer for counselling and assistance.
5. Fails to improve, despite the intervention plan and strategy devised by of the Student Welfare and Support Officer.
6. Fails to complete the Course on time.

If the intervention strategy does not lead to satisfactory progress in the course, further steps will be taken by the MIHE.

Monitoring Performance

Units must be designed in a way to allow lecturers to use a combination of different relevant and appropriate assessment types to monitor student progress in a unit including:

- Early formative assessments in all units (usually within the first 4 weeks of the commencement of the semester) to monitor students' progress with learning relevant information and their understanding instructions and feedback, and to gauge the effectiveness and suitability of the learning activities;

- Summative assessments with clearly defined assessment criteria or assessment rubrics to examine the outcomes of a learning process against specific learning objectives.

Lecturers will review student progress after each assignment.

Student at Risk Indicators

There are several risk indicators of students being unable to complete their course. They include:

1. *Poor attendance in class or online:* Students are expected to attend 100% of classes and however for the purposes of this policy poor attendance is defined as missing at least 2 classes in succession or 3 classes cumulatively without good reason. Where poor attendance occurs the Unit Co-Ordinator is required to contact the student to stress the importance of regular attendance. Attendance should be recorded in the student database, along with the unit results.
2. *Poor use of the Learning Management System.* This occurs where a student has not accessed the Learning Management System for 3 consecutive weeks or where the access time over that period is less than 1 hour. In such cases the Unit Co-Ordinator is required to contact the student to stress the importance of using these resources and to ascertain whether there are any issues on which the student needs support and/or whether referral to other support services is appropriate. In this regard the Student Welfare, Wellbeing and Support Policy and Procedure provides:
 - a. Academic support which includes but is not limited to study advice, language assistance, attendance, and meeting course requirements.
 - b. Welfare support which includes but is not limited to emergency, legal, and health services as well as referrals to external providers.
 - c. Information and advice on complaints and appeals policies and procedures.
 - d. Regularly reviews and updates to support services so that students have correct and up-to-date information.
3. Extensions for submitting an assignment may indicate medical, mental health, personal issues beyond the control of the student, or the stress of undertaking the Unit. Where appropriate, Unit Co-ordinators should advise the student of the study supports available. Extensions should be recorded on the student database, along with the Unit results.
4. *Deferral of a Unit:* This may indicate a risk of non-completion of the Course and may put at risk on-time completion. It should be recorded on the student database.
5. *Special Consideration:* Students who gained admission to a MIHE course with special consideration on the basis of having a mental or physical condition or disability and regardless of socioeconomic, educational, religious or cultural backgrounds may require additional support. With the written consent of the student academic staff will be made aware of these students in order to enable them to provide interventions, such as closer monitoring of performance and additional one-on-one time with these

students. The students admitted under special consideration who have been provided with additional academic support will be considered high probability for early intervention. Refer to the *Admissions and Enrolment Policy and Procedure the Equity, Diversity and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Framework and Policy* for details on admission with special consideration. If special consideration is applied to the evaluation of any assessment, this should be recorded in the student database.

6. *Failing a formative assessment in a unit, either because it was not attempted or the academic standard of the submitted work was unsatisfactory:* The Unit Co-Ordinator should counsel the student about their performance where this occurs and make them aware of the support services that MIHE provides pursuant to the Student Welfare, Wellbeing and Support Policy and Procedure. Data on failing formative or other assessments should be entered into the student database separately and in addition to the collection of results for each unit.
7. *Academic misconduct.* This may be an indicator that a student is having difficulties in achieving the required academic standards of the Course. If academic misconduct is proven, this information should be included in the student database. The *Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure* has its own intervention and appeal procedures.
8. *Failing a Unit:* MIHE should offer support the student in terms of showing them where they need to improve their performance if they are to take the unit again. Where the failed unit is an elective, MIHE should endeavour to discuss with the student whether another elective might be better taken in its place. In general, any failed unit should lead MIHE to offer student academic support which includes but is not limited to study advice, language assistance, attendance and meeting course requirements.
9. *Failing multiple Units or having a Grade Point Average (GPA) below 50%:* Where a student fails more than one unit, or one unit twice, or has a GPA below 50%, the Student Welfare and Support Officer will provide an intervention plan and strategy which is tailored to the individual student's circumstances and needs, and that will be implemented by the Course Director or their nominee. The intervention strategy is intended to assist students to improve their performance and complete the course within the minimum feasible time. A new study plan with reduced study load may be advised to the student taking into account their academic progress and remaining units to complete. International students may be advised to apply for an extension to their CoE. Lack of improvement after this intervention may lead to a broader intervention strategy or a declaration of unsatisfactory progress.

Academic staff will be trained to detect students displaying any of these student risk indicators, and how to deal with them appropriately. Over time, MIHE will gain large volumes of data on students and their performance. It will use this data to predict students who may become at risk of being unable to complete their Course.

The Dean and Course Director will monitor the academic/course progress of students and will be advised of students who are at-risk of unsatisfactory course progress by academic staff and the Student Welfare and Support Officer by week 6 of each semester.

Notifying At-Risk Students

Once students are identified as at-risk, the Dean or Course Director will be responsible for writing to the student advising them that they are at risk of unsatisfactory progress within five (5) business days of so being identified. Following this, the Dean or Course Director shall initiate an intervention strategy, monitoring its progress, and recording the process to its completion. These records will be monitored by the Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) and reported to the Academic Board (AB) at the end of each semester for their review.

If MIHE decides to extend the duration of the international student's enrolment, students must be advised to contact the Department of Home Affairs to seek advice on any potential impacts on their visa, including the need to obtain a new visa.

Enrolment Load Monitoring

MIHE will monitor the enrolment load of all students, especially international students, at the beginning of each semester. This step is taken to ensure that students do not exceed their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) given to international students. International students must enrol in a minimum of 4 units per semester. International students who enrol in fewer than 4 units per semester will be notified of having an unsatisfactory enrolment load and may be deemed as being at-risk. Exceptions can be made if students demonstrate extenuating circumstances such as health issues or on exceptional compassionate grounds.

Completion Time

Students are required to complete courses within an appointed timeframe. Domestic students must complete a bachelor's degree at MIHE within six years. For international students, their course duration is specified in their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) document. All students will be monitored to ensure that they are on track to complete their courses within the required timeframe, and students at risk of not completing their course within the appointed timeframe will be referred to the Dean or Course Director for further counselling and assistance.

Completion

Students who have an outstanding debt to MIHE will not be permitted to graduate until such debt has been paid.

The Dean and Course Director will monitor student progress to verify that each student has satisfactorily completed all course requirements and subsequently make recommendations to the Academic Board regarding

the awarding of course qualifications. The Academic Board will then recommend a list of graduands to the Board of Directors for approval for the granting of qualifications.

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.

Intervention Plan and Strategy

Once an intervention plan and strategy has been initiated, a member of staff or administration will be appointed to guide the student through the process and counsel them accordingly.

Students may be required to undertake interventions including:

- Meet the relevant staff on a regular basis for follow up on their academic progress;
- Attend workshops or sessions designed to improve academic skills, language skills, or other technical skills;
- Undergo counselling, seek support or seek mentorship;
- Attend additional classes, lectures, or lab sessions to make up for lost work;
- Amend their existing academic or enrolment pattern to ease their study load and consider extension of their course duration.

Once the intervention plan and strategy is completed, the Dean or Course Director will be responsible for notifying in writing to the student advising them of the outcome within five (5) business days.

Students will also remain in contact with their designated staff adviser to receive ongoing support.

If a student has passed less than 50% of the units, they are enrolled in over a period of one year, i.e. 12 months; then they are placed on conditional enrolment. Upon being placed on conditional enrolment, the student must work on a reduced study plan, as well as fulfil other aspects of their individualised intervention strategy.

If a student on conditional enrolment fails 50% of the units they are enrolled in as part of their reduced study plan in over the period of one year, i.e. 12 months, or fails the same unit 3 times; then they will be excluded from MIHE for one year. Once the year is completed, the student can apply again for admission at MIHE but must mention the exclusion in their application. Students can appeal conditional enrolment and exclusion (See *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*).

Expulsion

Domestic students will be notified about MIHE's intention to potentially expel them in writing (both electronic and by hard copy). Once notified, students have the right to appeal the process and can do so through the *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure* listed on MIHE's website.

The procedure is different for international students. International students are notified about their unsatisfactory course progress through a series of steps.

1. The student is notified through an Intention to Report letter about their unsatisfactory course progress.

2. The student can then use all available resources, including internal and external resources, to appeal the process within the given time frame of 20 business days. During this time the student must maintain their attendance and continue to work towards completing course requirements. MIHE will maintain the student's enrolment until the appeal process has been completed.
3. Once all avenues of appeals are exhausted, MIHE is bound to and will report the international student to the Australian Department of Home Affairs and the Department of Education. After this, international students are notified in writing of the impending expulsion and to seek assistance from the Department of Home Affairs regarding their visa status.

Students, both domestic and international, will be provided with support to appeal all processes before an expulsion is handed out.

Warning Letter

When students are deemed to be performing unsatisfactorily, students will be notified of their unsatisfactory performance in writing, detailing the reasons why their performance is unsatisfactory. This will be recorded and maintained on the student's file. Students may also seek advice, advocacy or guidance from the Student Welfare and Support Officer.

Student Response

Student will have the opportunity to respond to the Warning Letter in writing and demonstrate why their enrolment should not be terminated. The student may also be invited to present their case to the Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC). The student will be able to have a support person attend if they are presenting to the LTC, so long as that support person is not a lawyer.

Student Outcome Letter

The student will be notified in writing of the outcome after they have had the opportunity to respond. The written response must contain the reasons why MIHE has determined the outcome as well as provide details of the student's rights to appeal the decision. All materials in relation to 'At Risk' students will be maintained on the student's file.

Internal and External Appeals

Students may at any time, appeal a decision of being deemed as being at-risk or having unsatisfactory academic progress by lodging an appeal with the Dean or Course Director. The process for student appeals is detailed in the *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

Students also have the right to appeal the decisions made about conditions that are placed on their enrolment. Students may appeal on the grounds of new evidence or unfair treatment.

Students who have been sanctioned have the right to appeal any decisions which have resulted in their exclusion from their course of study. For more information refer to the *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

Students wishing to appeal must notify MIHE of this intention within 20 business days of receipt of the Intention to Report letter, otherwise they may be at risk of having their enrolment reported and cancelled.

If the results of the internal appeal are in favour of the student MIHE will immediately implement any decision required and will advise the student of the outcome. If the internal appeal is unsuccessful the student will be informed of the outcome and the reasons for the decision. The letter will also notify the student that they have the right to access the external appeals process.

Only once all internal avenues of appeal have been exhausted, will MIHE expel a domestic student, or report an international student's enrolment as cancelled. All relevant documentation is placed on the student's file and electronically recorded.

MIHE will not report any international student formally to Commonwealth agencies through PRISMS until the student has no further avenues of internal appeal and external appeal at the MIHE.