Academic Performance Policy (MPF1024)

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Statute 4.1 – The Academic Board
Statute 11.1 – Courses, Enrolment & Assessment
Regulation 11.1.A3 – Examination Rules and Supervision
Statute 11.4 - Unsatisfactory Progress
Higher Education Support Act 2003
Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000

SCOPE

This policy applies to all award and non-award coursework courses of the University, with the exception of the section on examinations which applies to all examinations held by the University. The section on coursework theses applies to all thesis or research project components of honours programs and graduate coursework programs where the thesis is weighted at 25 credit points or more.

POLICY

1. Assessment requirements

1.1 The Academic Board is responsible for oversight of assessment and delegates its responsibility for management and supervision of assessment as follows:

- Faculty examination boards are responsible for the management and supervision of any components of assessment other than formal supervised written examinations.
- The Academic Registrar is responsible for the management and supervision of every component of assessment which consists of a formal supervised written examination.

1.2 Components of assessment may be administered in any form and subject to any conditions specified in the subject outline. The components of assessment may include:

- any examination, essay, test, exercise, article, thesis or other requirement prescribed in the details of subjects or determined by an examination board
- any additional assessment administered by an examination board in accordance with policies and procedures on supplementary assessment and special consideration approved by the Academic Board.

1.3 All components of assessment in a subject will be published in the Handbook and the subject outline.

1.4 Every student is eligible for assessment unless they have been excluded from assessment.

1.5 Students must be available in the scheduled examination period at the end of each teaching period as detailed in the Academic Calendar.
1.6 Students must ascertain the dates and times at which they are required to attend for examinations or for the performance of other components of assessment.

1.7 Absence or lateness due to misreading the examination timetable or similar error does not entitle a student to any further examination or special consideration.

2. Academic progress

2.1 Students must make satisfactory progress towards the timely completion of their course and maintain a satisfactory academic standard to be allowed to continue their studies.

2.2 Faculties/graduate schools/student centres will review the academic progress of each student at the end of the first half and the end of the second half of the academic year after final results have been certified for each of the subjects in which the student has been enrolled in the relevant teaching or grouped period. Faculties/graduate schools/student centres will conduct reviews of students’ academic performance in a consistent and equitable way. The review will identify:

- students at risk of making unsatisfactory progress; and
- students who have made unsatisfactory progress.

2.3 Students who continue to make unsatisfactory progress may have their enrolment terminated.

3. Extensions

3.1 Teaching departments will publish assessment due dates in subject outlines at the start of the teaching period.

3.2 Teaching departments will not extend assessment due dates except where a student’s capacity to complete required work by the due date has been significantly affected by:

- acute illness
- misadventure
- other extraordinary cause or circumstance reasonably beyond their control.

3.3 Teaching departments may grant extensions on assessment due dates for up to two weeks (10 working days).

4. Special consideration

4.1 Special Consideration is available to students who have had their studies significantly impacted by short-term circumstances reasonably beyond their control such as acute illness.

4.2 Ongoing and episodic circumstances, are managed through the Student Equitable Adjustment Procedure (SEAP) rather than Special Consideration, unless SEAP arrangements are insufficient for a particular circumstance.

4.3 To be eligible for Special Consideration students must have complied with the assessment requirements as set out in the subject outline and met one of the criteria below:

- a student has been prevented from preparing or presenting for all or part of a component of assessment such as assignments and examinations; or
- a student has been, to a significant degree, adversely affected during the performance of a component of assessment.
5. **Coursework thesis supervision and examination**

5.1 A faculty that accepts a student into a course which has a thesis component must ensure that:

- it is able to appoint appropriate supervisors in a timely manner and provide adequate supervision for the student on a continuing basis
- it is able to provide appropriate resources to support the student
- a suitable thesis topic can be made available
- the thesis component can be examined appropriately.

5.2 Where a student from another university is placed at the University of Melbourne, the department must ensure that an appropriate contractual arrangement is agreed with the other university and the student, taking into account all of the provisions in section 5.1.

5.3 The principles governing the examination of coursework theses are:

- The assessment will reflect appropriate academic standards.
- Examiners will be given clear guidelines about assessment criteria and standards required for the various grades of assessment.
- Where practicable, there will be at least two examiners (particularly for theses weighted at 50 credit points or more).
- The process by which a final mark is produced from the examiners' ratings will be consistent within the program.
- There is a clear and transparent process for appointing examiners.
- The outcome of the assessment is not prejudiced by any conflict of interest (for example, concerning intellectual property or authorship).
- Examiners will have sufficient expertise to complete an assessment of the thesis in accordance with the terms of the stated assessment criteria.

5.4 Benchmarking methods will be used from time to time to provide assurances about the quality of the assessment process.

6. **Examiners**

6.1 Examiners for subjects and theses

6.1.1 The examiners in any subject for a degree, diploma or preliminary course are to be-

(i) if the subject is taught by one person, that person, or if the subject is taught by two or more persons, one or more of those persons designated by the chairperson of the examination board; unless the Board decides otherwise; and

(ii) after consultation (except in special circumstances) with the appropriate faculty, any additional examiners the Board thinks fit.

6.1.2 In the case of a thesis or work submitted in full or partial satisfaction of the requirements for a degree, diploma or preliminary course, at least two examiners must be appointed by the Board after consultation (except in special circumstances) with any appropriate faculty.

6.1.3 This section, which identifies the examiners for subjects, does not require that peer assessors be designated examiners.

6.2 Examiners unable to act
6.2.1 If a person designated or appointed as an examiner under this policy is absent or unable to act, the Board or the chairperson of the examination board (as appropriate) may at any time appoint or designate another person as examiner.

6.3 Designation of examiners for subjects

6.3.1 Subject to section 6.2, any designation or appointment of persons as examiners under this policy must be made annually-

(i) at least four weeks before the first component of assessment in the subject is due to be submitted or undertaken; and

(ii) for subjects taught only in the first semester and for subjects taught throughout the academic year, not later than 31 May of the year in question; or

(iii) for subjects taught only in the second semester, not later than 30 September of the year in question.

6.4 Designation of examiners for theses

6.4.1 Subject to section 6.2 any designation or appointment of a person as an examiner for a thesis or work must be made before or within a reasonable time after submission of the thesis or work by the candidate.

6.4.2 A person who is or who has been the supervisor of the candidate at any time during the preparation of a thesis or work is not to be appointed as an examiner for the thesis or work submitted in satisfaction of more than half of the requirements for a higher degree unless the thesis or work has been exempted from the operation of this sub-section by a resolution of the Board.

6.5 Examination boards

6.5.1 An examination board must be established by the appropriate faculty for each subject for a degree or diploma and is to consist of-

(i) all examiners in the subject, including persons designated as additional examiners under paragraph 6.1.1(ii); and

(ii) subject to sub-section 6.6, the head of the appropriate department.

6.5.2 The dean of the appropriate faculty or a person nominated by the dean takes the place of the head of department on the examination board if:

(i) the head of department so requests; or

(ii) no lectures are given in the subject; or

(iii) two or more departments share responsibility for giving lectures in the subject.

6.5.3 Unless in special circumstances the faculty decides otherwise, the head of the appropriate department or the dean of the appropriate faculty, or the person nominated by the dean, as the case may be, chairs the examination board.
6.5.4 The quorum for an examination board is two members.

6.6 Chairperson of examiners for higher degrees

6.6.1 Subject to sub-section 6.6.2, the chairperson of examiners for a thesis or work submitted in full or partial satisfaction of the requirements for a higher degree is to be the head of the appropriate department.

6.6.2 The dean of the appropriate faculty or a person nominated by the dean is the chairperson of the examiners for the purposes of this policy if:

(i) the head of department so requests; or

(ii) no lectures are given in the subject; or

(iii) two or more departments share responsibility for giving lectures in the subject.

6.7 Clinical assessment - Medicine and Dental Science

6.7.1 Every examiner in a subject in Medicine involving clinical assessment must be a medical practitioner of at least three years' standing.

6.7.2 Every examiner in a subject in Dental Science involving clinical assessment must be:

(i) a person registered as a dentist under the Dental Practice Act 1999, or

(ii) a medical practitioner; or

(iii) a member of the academic staff of a dental school.

6.8 Assistant markers

6.8.1 The chairperson of an examination board may, with the approval of the appropriate faculty, appoint assistant markers to assist the examiners in any subject.

6.9 Subjects pertaining to more than one faculty

6.9.1 If a subject pertains to more than one faculty the deans of each of the faculties concerned decide which faculty is to be regarded as the appropriate faculty for the purposes of this policy.

6.9.2 If:

(i) agreement is not reached by the deans as to which faculty is to be regarded as the appropriate faculty for the purposes of this policy; or

(ii) doubt exists as to the department or faculty to which a subject pertains, the matter will be decided by the Board.

7. Appeals
6.1. Students may lodge a grievance in regard to sections 1, 3, 4 or 5 of this policy. Students may lodge an appeal to Academic Board against a decision relating to academic progress (section 2).

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Academic Progress Review Procedure
- Appeals to the Academic Board Procedure
- Assessment Procedure
- Coursework Thesis Supervision, Enrolment and Assessment Procedure
- Examinations Procedure
- Extensions Procedure
- Special Consideration Procedure
- Student Complaints and Grievances Policy
- Student Complaints and Grievances Procedure
- Student Reasonable Adjustment Procedure

DEFINITIONS

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<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Academic disadvantage</td>
<td>Defined, ongoing, unpreventable circumstances that hamper a student's ability to participate in academic activities and demonstrate their academic merit.</td>
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<td>At Risk</td>
<td>Students will be identified as at risk where they:</td>
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<td>- Fail 50% or more of credit points attempted in the current teaching period for the first time; or</td>
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<td>- For undergraduate students, fail a compulsory or core subject for the first time; or</td>
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<td>- Withdraw after the census date from all subjects in the current teaching or grouped period for the first time</td>
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<td>Board</td>
<td>the Academic Board</td>
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<td>Coursework thesis</td>
<td>a thesis or research project completed by a student under the supervision of a member of the academic staff of the University as part of a coursework higher degree, an honours program or at the fourth year of an undergraduate program, which is weighted at 25 points or more.</td>
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<td>Department:</td>
<td>the department, school or other academic organisational unit that is responsible for the program in which the student is enrolled.</td>
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<td>Disability</td>
<td>Within the University environment, disability occurs when a student experiences significant difficulties in undertaking academic tasks as a result of an interaction between health status, body structures and functions, and personal and environmental factors.</td>
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<td>Examination</td>
<td>formally supervised assessment generally held during the examination period, including formally supervised written examinations; written or online tests; oral tests; performances; aural tests; clinical examinations</td>
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<td>Examination Board</td>
<td>also referred to as the Board of examiners, a group of examiners responsible for assessment in each subject</td>
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<td>Grouped period</td>
<td>A number of teaching periods grouped together for the purpose of reviewing academic progress. For example, a grouped period may include subjects offered in the summer semester and semester 1 teaching periods.</td>
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Satisfactory progress: completion at a defined minimum level of academic performance in a course.

Special consideration: A process which enables a student whose study has been significantly affected by circumstances outside their control to seek adjustments to assessment requirements, conditions or timing.

Teaching period: a formal study period within the academic year in which a student may be enrolled in and complete the requirements of a subject.

Thesis: in this policy means theses and research projects.

University: means the University of Melbourne.

Unsatisfactory Progress: Students will be considered to have made unsatisfactory progress when they:

- Reach the maximum course duration, including any approved amendments (see Course Duration policy), without completing the requirements of the course in which they are enrolled; or
- Fail to meet the conditions imposed on their enrolment by a CUPC or the Board; or,
- Withdraw after the census date from all subjects in the current teaching or grouped period for the second time; or
- Are undergraduate students and fail 50% or more of credit points attempted in the current teaching or grouped period and the previous teaching or grouped period; or
- Fail any subject for a second time; or
- Have an ‘At Risk’ status and withdraw from a compulsory subject previously failed; or
- Are graduate students and fail any subject; or
- Are enrolled in Bachelor Honours programs and fail to achieve an honours grade in any subject where an honours grade is required.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

The President of the Academic Board is responsible for the development, compliance monitoring and review of this policy and any associated guidelines.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER

The Academic Secretary is responsible for the promulgation and implementation of this policy in accordance with the scope outlined above. Enquiries about interpretation of this policy should be directed to the implementation officer.

REVIEW

This policy is to be reviewed by 28 February 2015.

VERSION HISTORY

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