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Course Progress Policy and Procedure

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V1.0	26.09.2018	Policy defined under National Code 2018
V2.0	23.11.2020	Full review and update under new management

Review Process: This policy shall be reviewed annually in compliance with education industry standards including the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (SRTOs) 2015, the ESOS Act 2000 and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education to Overseas Students 2018 and the ELICOS Standards 2018.



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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure New England College students are managed responsibly and in accordance with the requirements of the ESOS Framework including the ESOS Act 2000 and Standard 8 of the National Code 2018.

The Department of Home Affairs (DoHA) states that if an international student holds a student visa, they should be attending class, studying and passing their units within the period stated on their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).

Scope

The scope of this policy includes all overseas students studying qualifications offered by New England College.

Policy Principles

New England College will assess, monitor and record student's progress on completion of each unit of competency or at the end point of each study period (1 term) at the minimum.

The ESOS framework and DoHA visa conditions require that students maintain satisfactory academic progress in their course and attend full time study.

A generic course progress policy may not be appropriate for more than one course. Courses that require additional or varied progress rules will be provided a separate course progress policy.

This policy outlines the key principles of course progress monitoring, including course attendance requirements as per the National Code 2018, and as identified by New England College, to ensure that overseas are fully informed of their course progress and attendance obligations and are given all reasonable assistance in correcting any poor progress / attendance in order to complete their chosen qualification in the duration of their CoE.

Academic Requirements

Students are required to achieve competency in a minimum of 50% of enrolled units in each term regardless of term length. Resubmission attempts will not be factored into the monitoring deadline, unless compassionate or compelling circumstances apply.

Students who fail to achieve the minimum competency will be subject to implementation of an intervention strategy and will be required to attend an intervention strategy meeting as detailed later in this policy under 'Progress Rules and Post-Assessment Intervention Strategies'.

Any student who falls below 50% academic progress for two consecutive terms and has no supporting reasons shall be reported to the Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS for a breach of their student visa conditions.

If a student is identified for a second, but not consecutive study period as not making satisfactory course progress, the College does not automatically report the student for unsatisfactory course progress.

Course progress in a non-compulsory study period is not considered when determining whether or not a student has made satisfactory course progress over two consecutive study periods.



Identifying 'at risk' students

Any student who is not attending regular classes, or who may be at risk of not completing their course within its expected duration, is considered an 'at risk' student. The steps outlined in this policy do not impede early interventions where they are deemed necessary by New England College.

Any student that fails a unit of competency in their course may be considered 'at risk' to not complete the course in the expected duration and intervention strategies commenced at any point, if approved by the Academic Manager. College initiation of an early intervention strategy is at the discretion of the Academic Manager.

Early interventions may be triggered through any of the following means:

- Trainer identification of student disengagement and/or low participation in scheduled classes and lectures
- Where the student is deemed to be 'inactive' [refer to definition]
- Where the student has failed to attend intervention strategy meetings
- Where New England College staff identify that the student's vocational placement is pending due to the student's incapability to attend placement arranged by New England College (without any compassionate and compelling grounds)
- Student misbehaviour as outlined in New England College's Code of Conduct, or on a case-by-case basis where the matter constitutes a physical or emotional threat to other students or staff
- Student-initiated
- Identification of an emergent support need which was not apparent upon enrolment

Students who have been placed on early intervention are still subject to the procedures for attendance, progress and post-assessment intervention strategies outlined in this policy, unless compassionate or compelling circumstances apply.

Completion within expected duration

New England College has a process of periodic and objective marking periods to monitor student progress for identification of those students who might be at risk of not completing their course within the duration of study, consistent with the CoE, and allowing for intervention strategies to be implemented as soon as students are identified as 'at risk'.

Where a student has been identified as requiring an early or standard intervention strategy, the International Administration Team may authorise the addition of units/topics/modules that have been failed or not attempted in the previous study period to be added to the student's current or subsequent term timetable to enable the student to meet the course requirements in the remaining course duration.

Additional measures to ensure completion within the expected duration may involve a targeted support plan and/or one-on-one consultations in order to complete the additional work.

A student may study subjects during a non-compulsory study period or by increasing the number of units studied in some compulsory study periods to compensate for those study periods in which the student failed to make satisfactory academic progress or was studying a reduced load as part of an intervention arrangement.

Where New England College staff identify a student's vocational placement is pending due to the student's incapability to attend placement arranged by New England College (with a valid compassionate and compelling circumstance) or lack of available and adequate placements, New



England College will look for options to accommodate the student including through extension of the CoE.

Where New England College has implemented an intervention strategy as outlined within this policy, and in accordance with the National Code Clause 8.1.6.2, the International Administration Team may elect to extend the student's CoE duration in order to accommodate any additional academic requirements.

Any change/variation to a student's enrolment must be reported via PRISMS and in accordance with Section 19 of the ESOS Act within 31 days if the overseas student is 18 years of age or older, or within 14 days if the student is under 18.

Informing students of satisfactory course progress requirements

Students are informed of the requirements regarding course progress and attendance at multiple stages prior to enrolment and commencement of studies. These include, but are not limited to:

- **Pre-enrolment.** Summary of the New England College Course Progress Policy, as outlined in the International Student Handbook and on the New England College website.
- **Written Agreement.** A link to this policy is contained within each overseas student's written agreement.
- **Orientation.** Explanation of college attendance and progression monitoring practices, timeframes and assessment due dates as part of the orientation for each course.



Implementation of academic progression monitoring

Academic results monitoring process and intervals

The trainer must monitor, record and assess student course progress on completion of each unit of the course or, at the minimum, by the end of each study period. Details are to be kept on the student academic file, recorded in the student management system as well as tracked and analysed through internal reporting. This further analysis ensures warnings and intentions to report are sent on time.

At any time, when a trainer becomes aware of issues or has concerns regarding the student's attendance or progress they should first speak to the student (ensuring that all communication is recorded in the student's individual file) and then advise the Academic Manager of these concerns.

At any time during the study period if the student is identified by their trainer as 'a possible risk', the student will be given a verbal warning and offered counselling and assistance. This must be documented on the student's file and advice provided to the Academic Manager/Student Support Officer.

On receipt of a report from a trainer of an 'at risk' student for unsatisfactory attendance /course progress, the International Liaison Officer will meet with the trainer to establish what measures can be put in place to help the student improve their attendance/performance, and invite the student for an intervention strategy meeting. During the meeting the student will be offered assistance to help them improve their attendance/academic performance.

Intervention strategies to be discussed may include but are not limited to:

- Identifying what support strategies would best suit the situation and planning implementation.
- Academic and or personal support/counselling offered to the student internally or externally as appropriate
- Planned regular follow up and feedback from the teaching staff to track attendance and progress and maintain communication
- Advice on alternate units/courses if considered more suitable/appropriate for the student
- Resitting units
- Reduced number of units during the period of intervention, where appropriate, to assist the student in managing the workload.
- Any other support appropriate to the individual circumstances.

During the periodic marking periods academic progress of each student will be assessed and compiled by trainers of each class. This is done by reviewing academic files (workbook) or assessments submitted by students through the learning management system (LMS).

Once periodic marking is completed, the New England College international administration team conducts a report of all student's progress and records it in the Academic Result Sheet. This gives further opportunity to identify students with unsatisfactory course progress and a standard intervention can be implemented/warning letter sent/notice of intention to report as required.

- The Academic Result Sheet includes the due dates for each type of assessment within each unit of competency (e.g. theory, practical and vocational placement).



Academic results assessment calculations

All students shall be deemed '**Competent (C)**' or '**Not yet Competent (NYC)**' for each unit within the qualification they are enrolled and complete. The assessment shall be conducted by qualified assessors using New England College assessment tools/methods and recording processes according to the New England College Assessment Policy.

Based upon the number of competent and not yet competent units in a given period of study, an academic performance score will be calculated to assist in the identification of students at risk of not making satisfactory course progress.

Example: If there were 6 units in total assessed in any one term (17 weeks) and a student has been assessed as 'competent' in 2 units and 'not yet competent' in 4 units for the term, the student's academic progress would be calculated as follows:

Term 1 2020					
Student Name	Student ID	Total number of units assessed during the term	Number of units assessed 'competent'	Number of units assessed 'not yet competent'	Academic Performance (%)
XYZ Student	NEC001	6	2	4	33.33

It is the responsibility of the trainer/assessor to ensure that the 'Academic Result Sheet' is updated after each assessment is completed and recorded. All records must be retained on the student file.

Progress Rules and Post-Assessment Intervention Strategies.

Post assessment intervention strategies are tailored to meet each student's individual needs. Formal intervention strategies and counselling of the student will be implemented as soon as a student is identified as at risk.

Intervention Strategies could include:

- attending tutorials/study groups
- receiving individual assistance
- attending counselling
- receiving assistance with personal issues which are influencing progress
- receiving mentoring
- being placed in a suitable alternative subject within a course or a suitable alternative course
or
- a combination of the above and a reduction in course load.



Any student falls below 60% of the academic progress.

If the student is identified as falling below 60% of academic course progress during the periodic marking in the middle of the 1st Term, the student will be sent a warning letter indicating that they have fallen below 60% academic performance for the term, and failure to achieve competency in further units undertaken in the current term may result in failing to achieve satisfactory academic progress for the term. They will be offered counselling/intervention strategy support.

When a student's academic progress falls below 50% for the first term

When a student's academic progress falls below 50% for the first term the International Administration Team shall notify the trainer and a 1st Warning Letter shall be sent to via email indicating the student has to contact the college to attend an intervention strategy meeting at a given date, time and venue with the International Liaison Officer and Academic Manager. The purpose of the intervention strategy meeting is to discuss poor academic progress and implement strategies to ensure progress stays above the 50% academic progress requirement for the following term.

If the student does not attend the intervention Meeting the International Admin Team will: -

- Within five (5) working days make a recorded call to the student to understand the reason for no show and reschedule the Intervention Strategy Meeting for the earliest possible date.

Any student who is below 75% academic progress in their current term after falling below 50% in their previous term.

Students shall be sent a 2nd Warning Letter notifying them that they are at risk of breaching their requirement to maintain academic progression for each term they are enrolled. They are informed that they have fallen below 75% academic progress in the current term, after falling below the required academic progression in the previous term. They are informed that if they fall below the required academic progression in two consecutive terms, they will be reported to DoHA via PRISMS for unsatisfactory course progress.

They are invited to attend an intervention strategy meeting at a given date, time and venue with the International Liaison Officer and Academic Manager to discuss their poor academic progress and strategies to ensure they stay above the 50% academic requirement for the term.

If the student does not attend the Intervention Strategy Meeting the International Administration Team will: -

- Within five (5) working days make a recorded call to the student to understand the reason for no show and reschedule the Intervention Strategy Meeting for the earliest possible date.
- If contact cannot be established with the student, and no further attendance or course progress is recorded within the next twenty (20) days, discuss the student history and course progress with the trainer and PEO and on approval send the student a 'notice of intention to cancel enrolment' as a non-genuine student.

Students are given 20 days from the date of the letter to initiate an internal or external appeal.

Student enrolment will be maintained during an appeals process. For more information, refer to the New England College Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure. .



When a student's academic progress falls below 50% for 2 consecutive terms.

The student shall be sent an "Intent to report" letter indicating they are going to be reported to DoHA for unsatisfactory academic progress in their course of study. They are informed that this has occurred as they have failed to be deemed competent in more than 50% of their units for two consecutive terms. They are also informed of their ability to access the appeals and complaints process and have 20 working days to do so.

If the student does not access any appeal or complaint process within 20 working days, the report shall be submitted to DoHA via PRISMS.

Non-genuine Students

A non-genuine/non bona fide student is defined by New England College as a student with erratic (irregular/ inconsistent) course progress or does not progress in their course and does not attend/does not participate in regular scheduled classes.

If New England suspects a student is not a genuine/bona fide student, the college may cancel the student's enrolment under Standard 9 in the National Code 2018.

The College will ensure that prior to enrolment; students are made aware of the grounds on which cancellation of enrolment may occur as provided to them via the International Student Handbook.

All breaches to student's visa conditions must be reported to DoHA via PRISMS even if the student has ceased study.

Attendance Monitoring

Attendance of all international students is monitored in accordance with the New England College Course Attendance Policy and Procedure.

A full copy of the policy is available on the New England College website www.nec.edu.au



Intervention Strategy and Student Support

Where a student is deemed to be at risk of not achieving a satisfactory course progress, intervention strategies shall be implemented to provide the student the opportunity to improve their progress and attendance. These intervention steps will include meeting with the student to identify the cause that is placing the student at risk. At this meeting, strategies to assist the student in completing the course within the expected duration shall be discussed and implemented as required. These strategies may include, but are not limited to:

- Additional tuition and academic support
- Providing assistance, including referral to external counselling services, with personal issues which are influencing progress
- Timetable adjustments
- Personal strategies to improve the student's ability to complete the course requirements:
- Opportunity to re-sit a unit
- Extension in duration of course
- Change of course.

The International Liaison Office and Academic Manager will meet with students identified as being at risk of not achieving satisfactory academic progression and decide the intervention strategy most suited to the student's specific situation.

The steps involved in implementing the intervention strategy include:

- Meeting and interviewing the student
- Development of an appropriate strategy
- Implementation of the strategy
- Close Monitoring and recording of the student's subsequent attendance and progress
- Warning letter if satisfactory progress is not maintained
- Further interventions and use of alternative strategies where necessary

Extending Course Duration

New England College will not extend the duration of the overseas student's enrolment if the overseas student is unable to complete the course within the expected duration unless:

1. There exists documented student acceptance, and implementation of, a New England College intervention strategy.
2. An approved deferral or suspension of the overseas student's enrolment has occurred under Standard 9 of the National Code 2018 (Deferring, suspending or cancelling the overseas student's enrolment).
3. There are compassionate or compelling circumstances which are approved by the college.

This may include but is not limited to:

- Serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend class.
- Bereavement of close family members such as spouse, sibling, parents or grandparents.
- Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel which has impacted on the student's studies.
- Traumatic experience which could include:
 - Involvement in, or witnessing of, a serious accident
 - Witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime (these cases should be supported by police or psychologist reports).



Reporting a Breach of Student Academic Progress

Any student who falls below the 50% academic progress requirement for two consecutive terms and cannot provide valid supporting reasons shall be reported to the Department of Home Affairs (DoHA) via PRISMS for a breach of their visa conditions.

When issued, the Notice of Intention to Consider Cancellation (NOICC) must describe any action taken so far, including intervention meetings, strategies and warning letter previous issued. The NOICC also must detail the student's right to appeal the decision and provide advice on what the student must do regarding their visa.

Students have 20 working days from the date the '**Notice of Intention to Consider Cancellation (NOICC)**' is processed to appeal the decision of their academic non-performance.

If a student chooses not to appeal a decision, or the appeal is unsuccessful, then the breach of visa conditions shall be reported as outlined in the policy.

This process of reporting breaches via PRISMS is the responsibility of the New England College PRISMS Administrator.

The Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) will be cancelled and the Department of Home Affairs will be notified via PRISMS for unsatisfactory course progress as a breach of visa condition 8202 and Standard 8 of the National Code 2018 in accordance with section 19(2) of the ESOS Act if:

- The internal and external complaints processes have been completed and the breach has been upheld
- The overseas student has chosen not to access the internal complaints and appeals process within the 20 working day period
- The overseas student has chosen not to access the external complaints and appeals process; or
- The overseas student withdraws from the internal or external appeals process by notifying New England College in writing.

This will result in the student needing to discuss his/her attendance record with DoHA within 28 days from the date of cancellation. DoHA will consider all the information available and if they decide to consider cancellation, DoHA will send a **Notice of Intention to Consider Cancellation (NOICC)** prior to a decision being made to cancel the student's visa. The student will be given an opportunity to respond to the NOICC to explain the situation.

Copies of all letters, details of phone calls made and any reports are to be kept in the student file.

Students who have received a Notice of Intention to Consider Cancellation (NOICC) should consult with the International Liaison Officer prior to attending any further classes.



Complaints and Appeals

A student may appeal on the following grounds:

- The college's failure to record or calculate the student's marks accurately
- Compassionate or compelling circumstances
- The college did not follow documented policies and procedures that have been made available to the student.

If a student chooses to access the complaints and appeals process, New England College will maintain the student's enrolment while the complaints and appeals process is ongoing as per the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

If the appeal shows that there was an error in calculation, and the student actually made satisfactory course progress (successfully completed more than 50% of the course requirements over two consecutive study periods) there is no requirement to report the student and/or implement an intervention.

If the appeals process shows that the student has not made satisfactory progress, but there are compassionate or compelling reasons for the lack of progress, ongoing support must be provided to the student through New England College's intervention strategy. In these cases, New England College does not report the student.

If the student chooses not to access the complaints or appeals processes within the twenty (20) working day period, withdraws from the complaints and appeals process, or on completion of the appeals process unsatisfactory course progress is confirmed, the student will be reported to DoHA via PRISMS within 5 working days.

When a student is reported for unsatisfactory course progress DoHA will consider all the information available and if they decide to consider cancellation, DoHA will send a Notice of Intention to Consider Cancellation (NOICC) prior to a decision being made to cancel the student's visa. Students will be given an opportunity to respond to the NOICC and explain their situation.

A full copy of the New England College Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure is available in the Written Agreement/Student Contract and at www.nec.edu.au



Definitions

Academic performance: Assessment of competency as the student progresses through the qualification. For the purpose of this policy/procedure academic performance is calculated as the units deemed competent as a percentage of the total units delivered and assessed during the given period.

Term: New England College defines a study period as a 'term' of study. The duration of a term varies within different courses, however, cannot exceed 26 weeks

Course progress: The measure of advancement within a course towards its completion.

Unit: A discrete component of study within a course, usually an individual unit of competency as defined by the training package of the relevant qualification.

Non Compliance: The failure or refusal to abide by the conditions of a student visa

Notice of Intent to Report: Communication advising student of New England College's intention to cancel the student on unsatisfactory course progress and report to DoHA, also outlining the appeals process and what action needs to be taken.

At Risk: Any student who may be at risk of not completing their course within its expected duration. At risk students will be subject to an intervention strategy as outlined in this policy.

International Administration Team: At New England College the International Administration Team comprises of the International liaison Officer, Administration Officer, Academic Manager and PEO.

Online Assessment: Students may be required to submit assessments through the online Learning Management System (LMS). This is an assessment method only. However, mode of delivery for all students is face-to-face.

Inactive student: 'Inactive' is a period of unexplained student absences/non progression, for example failure to return after an arranged holiday break, suspension or deferment, or failure to commence in any subjects for a compulsory study period.

Vocational Placement: Vocational placement provides students with the opportunity to receive practical on-the-job training and experience as an assessable part of their vocational education and training course.

Intervention Strategy: A strategy, or combination of strategies, which are implemented once a student has been assessed as not having met satisfactory course progress as outlined in this policy. An intervention strategy aims to identify the cause(s) of unsatisfactory progression and provide support to assist students to improve their academic performance.

No Show: Failure to attend the scheduled Intervention Strategy Meeting without prior notification.

Periodic Marking: At New England College, during the mid and end of every term, there is a dedicated marking period for the trainers to mark assessment, submit results for entry into the student management system and prepare an academic result sheets to ensure timely identification of 'at risk' students.

Objective Marking: At the discretion of the International Administration Team, trainers can be asked to conduct objective marking before the periodic marking period in order to ensure timely identification and support of 'at risk' students.

Intervention Strategy Meeting (ISM) Tracker: Any student for whom the intervention strategy has been implemented is recorded to facilitate frequent and tailored monitoring of student performance against the requirement benchmarks and intervention strategy targets.