Higher Education Academic Progression Policy and Procedure

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) Charles Darwin University ('the University', 'CDU') recognises the importance of students effectively transitioning and progressing through their studies and connecting students with appropriate assistance and support to enhance their academic performance and achieve their study goals.

(2) The University is committed to maintaining high academic standards and achieving quality outcomes for graduates, and as such will monitor the academic achievement of our students, with a focus on early intervention.

Section 2 - Purpose

(3) This policy and procedure sets out the principles and framework for supporting students to maintain academic progress and outlines the measures that the University will implement to monitor and review the academic performance of students.

Section 3 - Scope

(4) This policy and procedure applies to all domestic and international students enrolled in a higher education coursework award course, enabling and/or non-award course of study offered by the University.

a. For further information, international students may refer to International Students – Monitoring Course Progression Procedure.

(5) This policy and procedure does not apply to:

a. Students enrolled in a vocational education and training (VET) course. These students will have their academic progression monitored under the International Students - VET Course Progression Procedure for international VET students and the VET Domestic Student Progression Procedure for domestic VET students.
b. Higher Degree by Research students. These students will have their academic progression monitored under the Higher Degree by Research - Progression Procedure.
c. Students in hyperflexible courses.

(6) This policy and procedure outlines the minimum requirements for monitoring student progression.

Section 4 - Policy

(7) This policy identifies the scope of a student's academic performance as the following:

a. Good standing (GS);

b. At risk of unsatisfactory progress (AR); and
c. Unsatisfactory progress (UP).

Roles and responsibilities

(8) The University is committed to fostering an education environment where every student can succeed regardless of their social, cultural, or educational background, in line with the Support for Students Policy.

(9) The University acknowledges that academic performance may vary over time and is committed to ensuring students are provided with the right tools, support, and connections to help them realise their potential. With the right support, every student can become a self-directed learner and the University aims to achieve this by providing:

a. early intervention, so that students experiencing difficulty or challenges that may affect their studies can be supported and equipped to achieve academic progress;
b. continuous monitoring of students' academic progress, and where appropriate attendance, and connecting students with relevant learning and support services and opportunities to enhance their academic skills at no extra cost to them; and
c. clear and timely advice where there are concerns regarding a student's academic performance and/or risks to them completing their studies, and the impacts such circumstances may have on their enrolment.

(10) Students are accountable for their own academic performance and have a responsibility to:

a. manage their study loads appropriately, prepare for and attend classes, and commit to studying for the recommended time periods each week;
b. seek assistance in a timely manner and engage with support services and advice offered by the University; and
c. comply with relevant university policies, procedures, and award requirements.

(11) University staff will monitor student progress and foster student success through:

a. timely and informed feedback on learning and assessment items so that students understand how they can improve their academic performance and study habits;
b. identifying and contacting students who may not be engaging in their studies and are seen to be at risk of not achieving satisfactory academic progress;
c. supporting students in their learning journey and being available to students who seek additional guidance and advice regarding their academic performance and circumstances; and
d. providing enrolment or assessment flexibility where life gets in the way.

Student support services

(12) The University acknowledges that some students may find the transition to their studies or courses at CDU challenging, and that students may experience circumstances that can impact on their ability to progress effectively.

(13) Students are encouraged to actively seek advice and support (online and/or in-person) regarding any challenges or difficulties that they may be experiencing at the earliest opportunity so that appropriate support, guidance, and services can be put in place.

(14) Student support is available through the Life and wellbeing site and may include:

a. First Nations Student Support;
b. Language and Learning Support;
c. targeted academic skills training or tutoring;

d. Access and Inclusion support to develop a Learning Access Plan;
e. program or career advice;
f. free counselling support.

Monitoring and early intervention

(15) To support students, lecturers, Unit Coordinators, and Course Coordinators, or equivalent, will monitor the engagement of students, through indicators such as:

a. class attendance (online and/or in-person);
b. GPA levels of 3.0 or below;
c. not logging onto Learnline within the first two (2) weeks of the study period. Students who have not logged into Learnline are identified in the Early Intervention Report and contacted by the principal lecturer;
d. failure to participate in, or failure of, their first assessment item; and
e. unit withdrawal.

(16) Monitoring will enable early intervention including the provision of advice, support, and the referral to student support services in a timely manner.

a. The identification and management of international students on a student visa at risk of not meeting course attendance requirements is described in the International Students - Monitoring Course Progression Procedure.

Formal review of academic progress

(17) The University will monitor and formally review students' academic progress for the following review periods:

a. Review period 1 – includes semesters and study periods with an official grade release date between 1 January and 30 June.
b. Review period 2 – includes semesters and study periods with an official grade release date between 1 July and 31 December.

(18) The University will assess students to determine whether they:

a. have made satisfactory academic progress;
b. are at risk of unsatisfactory progress; or
c. have made unsatisfactory progress.

Section 5 - Procedure

Satisfactory academic progress

(19) A student is considered to have made satisfactory academic progress where:

a. they have passed more than 50% of the units in which they are enrolled;
b. have passed a previously failed unit on a subsequent attempt; and
c. they have passed all simulation blocks, placement or capstone units.

(20) If, despite making satisfactory progress, a student has also recorded a fail grade, they will be advised of relevant support services, such as:

a. Language and Learning Support or First Nations Student Support;
b. targeted academic skills training or tutoring;
c. Access and Inclusion for a Learning Access Plan;
d. international student support;
e. their course coordinator;
f. Careers and Employability; and
g. free and confidential counselling to assist with personal issues that may be impacting their studies.

At risk of unsatisfactory progress

(21) A student will be deemed as at risk of unsatisfactory academic progress where they have:

a. failed the same unit or a previous version of the same unit twice; and/or
b. received fail grades in 50% or more of units attempted; and/or
c. failed a simulation block, placement or capstone unit.

(22) Students will be encouraged to attend a meeting with their Course Coordinator, or equivalent, before the Census Date of the following semester to discuss their academic progress and collaboratively develop strategies to improve their performance for the following study period.

a. A meeting with the Course Coordinator, or equivalent, for targeted feedback and learning support is compulsory for those students who have failed simulation blocks, placement, or capstone units.

(23) A Comeback Strategy Toolkit will be made available to students to assist them with improving their academic performance. Strategies to improve academic performance may include, but are not limited to:

a. referral to specialist support services i.e., Language and Learning Support;
b. reduction of the number of units studied in the following period;
c. development of a study plan, including limiting unit choice, for the following period; and/or
d. other interventions as appropriate.

(24) Students are responsible for implementing suggested intervention strategies and are strongly encouraged to access the support services offered by the University.

(25) Students should be aware that further fail grades may have a more severe impact on their enrolment.

Unsatisfactory progress

(26) Students are assessed as having made unsatisfactory progress where:

a. they have met the criteria for being at risk of unsatisfactory performance for two or more consecutive periods; and/or
b. they have failed a unit for the third or more time; and/or
c. they have failed a simulation block, placement or capstone unit for the second time or more; and/or
d. they have previously been identified as having made unsatisfactory progress in the previous review period and have failed to meet a condition of enrolment (see enrolment conditions 30a).

(27) Students who have made unsatisfactory progress will be notified in writing and must provide written reasons justifying why they should be permitted to continue with their studies.

a. Students must respond within ten (10) working days from the day the initial Unsatisfactory Progress Notice is

sent.

b. An extension of up to five (5) working days to the above deadline may be granted in cases where students can demonstrate special circumstances that prevented them from responding by the deadline. Special circumstances include:
    i. Significant medical illness or injury of a student or the student's family members;
    ii. Bereavement of close family members such as parents, grandparents and children;
    iii. An adverse experience that has impacted on the student such as involvement or witnessing a serious accident or witnessing or being a victim of crime;
    iv. Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the students' home country requiring emergency travel and which has impacted on their studies;
c. Where an extension is refused, a review process is available as a final outcome.
    i. Students may request a review within three (3) working days by emailing appeals@cdu.edu.au.
    ii. No extensions to the review period will be granted.
d. Discretionary activities or circumstances within the student's control, for example attendance at sporting events, holidays, and other discretionary travel will not constitute grounds for an extension.

(28) Students should enrol or remain enrolled in the following teaching period, acknowledging that their enrolment will be conditional on the University's acceptance of their response.

(29) The relevant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor will review the student's unsatisfactory progress documents, giving consideration to:

a. the reasons provided by the student;
b. the student's past academic performance;
c. adherence to the agreed strategies, such as the Learning Management Plan, to improve academic performance;
d. prior engagement with university support services;
e. overall study load;
f. stage in their course and likelihood of completing their course within the maximum allowable time;
g. relevant policies including the Support for Students Policy and the Enrolment Policy; and
h. regulatory and accreditation requirements.

(30) Following a student's response, they will be notified in writing within ten (10) working days of the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor's decision, which will include one or more of the following:

a. conditional enrolment in their course of study under a Learning Management Plan which addresses the following:
    i. prescribed units of study;
    ii. reduction in unit load;
    iii. meeting with the Course Coordinator, or equivalent, for further feedback and learning support;
    iv. consultation with an Academic Language and Learning Support Program Advisor;
    v. careers counselling;
    vi. restriction from enrolling in a specific unit for a period of six (6) or twelve (12) months; and/or
    vii. other appropriate intervention strategies, including an agreed intermission or approved break from study.
b. offer a transfer to an alternate course of study at the same or lower level; or
c. exclusion from the course for a period of six (6) or twelve (12) months, as outlined below.

(31) In the event that a student applies for an intermission after receiving a Learning Management Plan, the Progression team will notify the course coordinator. The student's conditional enrolment will remain in place and continue upon their return.

(32) The course coordinator will take all reasonable steps to enforce the Learning Management Plan, including ensuring that all relevant conditions are met prior to the Census Date.

(33) In the event of a student course transferring or applying to another higher education coursework course at the same or lower AQF level than the originating course, the status of ‘at risk of unsatisfactory progress’ will be applied for their first semester.

Exclusion

(34) Following a decision to exclude a student for Unsatisfactory Progress, the student will be issued with an Intent to Exclude Notice, advising them of:

a. the duration of the exclusion;
b. the rationale for the decision;
c. the University’s obligation to report the student’s exclusion to the relevant government authority and to seek advice regarding impacts to their student visa (applicable to student visa holders only); and
d. their option to seek an appeal of the decision.

(35) Students will have twenty (20) working days following the issue of the Intent to Exclude Notice to lodge a formal appeal. Failure to do so will result in their enrolment being discontinued.

a. Cancellation of a student’s enrolment and reporting to the relevant government department will not take place until the expiry of the twenty (20) working day appeal period, or if an appeal is lodged, until after the appeal has been finalised, unless the student's health or wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, is likely to be at risk.

(36) During a period of exclusion:

a. a student cannot enrol in or transfer to another higher education coursework course at the same or a higher AQF level.
b. a student may apply for an Alternate Exit award if it exists and if their completed unit enrolments satisfy the requirements of such an award.

Appeal

(37) A student can appeal an intent to exclude notice in accordance with Step 3 of the Complaints Policy – Students.

Non-response

(38) Where a student does not submit a written Student Response by the prescribed time, the student will be issued with an Intent to Exclude Notice by the Progression Team.

(39) The Intent to Exclude Notice will:

a. inform the student:
    i. that they have been excluded for a period of six (6) months;
    ii. that they may request an extension to the response time to the Progression team under the special circumstances described above;
    iii. of the University’s obligation to report the student’s exclusion to the relevant government authority if the

student is the holder of a student visa. Not achieving satisfactory course progress will affect the continued issuance of a student visa; and

b. be sent by email to the student's official University email address.

Returning to a course after exclusion

(40) Following a period of exclusion, students may re-enrol in their course with approval from the Progression team if:

a. They have had active enrolment in the preceding 12 months;
b. They have not exceeded the maximum allowable time to complete their course; and
c. Their course is not in teach-out.

(41) In the event of more than 12 months of inactivity, the student's enrolment having exceeded the maximum allowable time, or the course being in teach out, a student who wishes to return to a course after a period of exclusion must re-apply for course re-instatement as per the Enrolment Policy.

(42) Returning students must complete the Comeback Strategy Toolkit and, as required, discuss its implementation with their faculty.

(43) The Progression team will provide students with the conditions of enrolment and preparation options to successfully re-engage with their studies including:

a. the Comeback Strategy Toolkit;
b. referral to student support services; and/or
c. academic advice.

(44) A student who has been excluded in the past five years, and who re-enrols in the same or another higher education coursework course will be given the status of being 'at risk of unsatisfactory progress' for the semester and continue to be monitored according to this policy.

(45) Students will be re-enrolled into the current version of the course, considering that their previous version of the course may not be available. Where possible, credit will be transferred to the current course enrolment.

Record management

(46) Records will be kept and maintained in in accordance with the Records and Information Management Policy and Procedure and the Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.

(47) Confidential records relating to student progress communications, student responses and outcomes will be retained on the student's file.

(48) Records will be disposed of according to the relevant University Retention and Disposal Schedules.

Reporting

(49) The Progression team will aggregate data to monitor, review and report on academic progression to relevant management and governance committees to identify common themes, trends and drive improvements. Reporting will occur on a regular cycle, and every effort will be made not to disclose any details that could identify individual students.

Section 6 - Non-Compliance

(50) Non-compliance with governance documents is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct - Employees or the Code of Conduct - Students, as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures outlined in the Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2025 and the Code of Conduct - Students.

(51) Complaints may be raised in accordance with the Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedure - Employees and Complaints Policy - Students.

(52) All staff members have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Whistleblower Reporting (Improper Conduct) Procedure.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	12th October 2026
Review Date	31st October 2028
Approval Authority	Vice-President Governance and University Secretary
Approval Date	10th October 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Lisa-Marie Stones Director Student and Academic Services
Implementation Officer	Saurav Kundu Coordinator Student Progression
Enquiries Contact	Saurav Kundu Coordinator Student Progression Student Administration

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Census Date" - The last date for students to withdraw from enrolled units without academic or financial penalty, apply for a leave of absence, or change their citizenship status or contribution payment option.

"Course Coordinator" - An academic staff member who is responsible for the academic management of a course.

"University" - Charles Darwin University, a body corporate established under section 4 of the Charles Darwin University Act 2003. The University is comprised of the various faculties, CDU TAFE, organisational units, and formal committees, including the governing University Council and Academic Board.

"Governance document" - means policy or procedure published in the Governance Document Library. Policies and procedures are collectively called ‘governance documents’ and are often referred to as ‘policy’ or ‘University policy’.

"Higher education coursework course" - Higher education coursework courses include award courses, which lead to a qualification recognised by the AQF, and accredited non-award courses, including enabling, foundation, preparatory, bridging, study abroad, international exchange, and other types of accredited non-award courses.