



Course Progress Policy

Policy

VACTS systematically monitors and records the progress of each student for the courses in which they are enrolled. VACTS will monitor the progress of learners and assist them to meet their study goals throughout their courses.

Learners are required to meet satisfactory course progress requirements according to the Department of Home Affairs course progress policy.

A compulsory study period is defined as one VACTS term.

All learners will have their progress monitored at the end of each study period.

Arrangements will be put in place to assist those learners who are identified as not making satisfactory course progress.

Learners who do not meet the requirements for satisfactory course progress over two consecutive compulsory study periods will be considered in breach of their visa condition and will be reported to the Department of Education(DOE) and the Department of Home Affairs.

Throughout the process of course progress monitoring, learners will be provided with appropriate avenues of appeal.

Procedures

Satisfactory course progress requirements

A student must be assessed as competent in atleast 50% of the units attempted in each compulsory study period to achieve satisfactory course progress. A student who has been assessed as not yet competent in 50% or more of the units attempted in a compulsory study period of (one VACTS term) is deemed to have not met satisfactory course progress requirements.

Process for assessing satisfactory course progress

The RTO Manager is responsible for identifying learners at risk. Following the completion of the entry of all assessment outcomes at the end of each compulsory study period, the RTO Manager will identify all learners at risk (Learners at risk register). The register will identify learners at risk by student number and name, and list the units of competency for which they have been assessed as not yet competent. A student at risk is defined as one who has not made satisfactory academic progress in a course for a compulsory study period (providing the study period is not the second consecutive study period for which this is the case), and is therefore subject to an intervention strategy.

Notifying learners of the requirement to attend an intervention strategy meeting

The Student Services Manager/CEO is responsible for making contact by mail with all learners at risk. The letter sent to learners at risk is referred to as the notice of failure to meet course progress requirements.

The letter notifies learners at risk that:

- they have not met satisfactory course progress requirements for the previous study period
- they are required to attend an intervention strategy meeting with the RTO Manager (or a designated trainer/assessor delegated by the RTO Manager)



Intervention strategy meetings

The RTO Manager or a trainer/assessor delegated by the RTO Manager will meet with all learners at risk. These meetings are referred to as intervention strategy meetings.

The objective of the each intervention strategy meeting is to develop a strategy to:

- help the student meet the course progress requirements for the current study period
- enable the student to satisfy the conditions of their student visa by completing their course within the expected duration.

Intervention strategy meetings must take place as soon as possible following the end of the study period, but no later than the end of the third week of the following study period.

The intervention strategy meeting with each student at risk will address the issue of not meeting satisfactory course progress requirements in the previous study period.

The following topics will be amongst those discussed during the intervention strategy meeting with each student at risk

- the consequences (reporting to Department of Home Affairs for unsatisfactory course progress) of not meeting satisfactory course progress requirements in two consecutive study periods.
- the requirement to attend scheduled meetings to discuss progress
- the suitability of the course for the student
- a revised study plan (e.g. a decreased study load, reassessment in units of competency for which the student has not been assessed as competent and for which the student has not been previously reassessed)
- the availability of academic support classes and their suitability for the student (there is a fee for each two-hour academic support class – please refer to the current fee schedule)
- the availability of referral to personal guidance counsellors (internal or external)(there is no fee for referral to counselling), although external counselling may incur a fee
- attendance at ongoing individual case management sessions to discuss progress
- assistance with issues of language, literacy or numeracy
The student may be required to attend LLN skills assistance classes
- the availability and suitability of one-on-one academic mentoring(there is a fee for one-on-one academic mentoring – please refer to the current fee schedule)

An intervention strategy, designed to provide the student with the opportunity to recover from the unsatisfactory academic progress and recommence a successful study program, will be planned, documented, and agreed during the intervention strategy meeting.

Intervention strategy agreement

At the end of the intervention strategy meeting, the RTO Manager or the delegated trainer/assessor and the student will agree upon an intervention strategy. The intervention strategy will require subsequent meetings with the RTO Manager or other identified members of staff. The RTO Manager will provide the student with an intervention strategy agreement which is signed by both parties. The intervention strategy agreement will summarise the topics discussed during the intervention strategy meeting and list the remedial activities agreed upon.



The intervention strategy agreement will include, but not be restricted to:

- actions to be taken by the student
- the timeframe for completing those actions
- details of weekly meetings to monitor the progress of the student as the intervention strategy proceeds (these will be with a trainer/assessor delegated by the RTO Manager).
- information regarding implications of not meeting satisfactory course progress requirements in two consecutive study periods
- a recommendation, if necessary, for the student to apply for an extension of course duration
- information on the VACTS complaints and appeals process

Monitoring the intervention process

Learners at risk will be required to attend meetings with the RTO Manager, or with a trainer/assessor delegated by the RTO Manager, at the times and locations specified in the intervention strategy agreement. During these meetings, each student's progress according to the agreed actions of the intervention strategy will be reviewed.

If the RTO Manager determines that a student has failed to comply with the agreed actions of the intervention strategy, or if the student is experiencing difficulty with the requirements of the intervention strategy, the RTO Manager or delegated trainer/assessor will organise additional support for the student as necessary.

Any additional support strategies will be discussed during a meeting of the RTO Manager or delegated trainer/assessor and the student, and documented and agreed in writing between the RTO Manager or delegated trainer/assessor and the student.

Additional support strategies may incur a fee according to the schedule of fees documented in the enrolment offer and acceptance agreement.

Register of learners notified of at risk

All learners at risk will have their details added to the register of learners at risk.

Appealing the need for an intervention

A student at risk may decide to appeal the necessity for intervention. If so, the VACTS appeals process can be invoked by the student. A student has 20 working days to appeal the decision to report to place them on academic probation and implement an intervention strategy. The 20 working days begins from a date specified in the letter which allows for reasonable time for delivery of the letter.

Learners no longer at risk of failure to meet course progress requirements

If a student demonstrates competency in 50% or more of the units of competency in the study period following that in which the student was identified as being at risk, the student will be deemed as no longer at risk. The register of learners at risk will be updated accordingly by the Student Services Manager.

Filing details of intervention

Individual intervention strategies are to be filed in the student's hard file and entered as notes in the student database. A record of each student's participation in activities agreed as part of the intervention strategy is to be kept and stored in the student's file.



Intention to report to Department of Home Affairs

Learners who are sent a letter informing them of VACTS's intention to report them to Department of Home Affairs for not meeting course progress requirements will have their details added to the register of learners to be reported to Department of Home Affairs for not meeting satisfactory course progress requirements.

Appealing against VACTS's intention to report to Department of Home Affairs for not meeting satisfactory course progress requirements

A student has 20 working days to appeal the decision to report to Department of Home Affairs for not meeting satisfactory course progress requirements. The 20 working days begins from a date specified in the letter (allowing for reasonable delivery time) informing the student of VACTS's intention to report which allows for reasonable time for delivery of the letter.

Notices of intention to report to Department of Home Affairs for not meeting satisfactory course progress requirements are sent by registered mail to the address on the student's file.

Grounds for Appeal

If the student appeals the decision to report for not meeting satisfactory course progress requirements, the appeals process will be invoked according to the VACTS complaints and appeals and procedures.

Grounds for learners to appeal against VACTS's decision to report the student to Department of Home Affairs for not meeting satisfactory course progress requirements are:

- VACTS has not recorded or calculated the student's results correctly
- There are compassionate or compelling circumstances (as defined in the Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances Policy) which have contributed to the student's unsatisfactory progress
- VACTS has not implemented an intervention strategy in accordance with the documented policies and procedures
- VACTS has not implemented other policies which may impact upon the student's results, eg. assessment policy, feedback policy, moderation on appeal
- VACTS has not made relevant policies available to the student

Possible outcomes of the appeal process

Possible outcomes of the appeals process are:

- Appeal is upheld because an error was made in a calculation and the student has made satisfactory progress. No further action is taken. All documentation is filed in the student's file and a note is placed in the student's file in the student database to the effect that appeal has been upheld.
- Appeal is upheld due to compassionate or compelling reasons for failure to meet satisfactory course progress requirements. In this case, an intervention strategy is implemented to support the student. All documentation is filed in the student's file and a note is placed in the student's file in the student database to the effect that the appeal has been upheld and an intervention strategy implemented.



- Appeal is dismissed. All documentation is sent to the CEO for reporting to Department of Home Affairs through PRISMS as soon as practicable. All documentation is then placed in the hard file of the student and a note in the student's file in the student database.
- Student withdraws from the appeals process by written notice. All documentation is sent to the CEO for reporting to Department of Home Affairs through PRISMS as soon as practicable.

Final letter to report

If, after 20 working days, no appeal against the decision to report to Department of Home Affairs has been lodged, or the outcome of the VACTS appeal process does not support the student, or the student has appealed and then withdrawn from the appeals process, the Student Services Manager will generate a "final letter to report".

This final letter to report will be sent by registered mail to the address on the student's file by registered post.

The final letter to report will specify that the student has 20 working days from a date specified in the letter (allowing reasonable time for delivery) to initiate an external review of the decision to report. Advice to the student of the right to appeal the decision with the Overseas Student Ombudsman is included in the letter. Please refer to the external review policy for more information.

Reporting to Department of Home Affairs

If no external review is initiated, the CEO will verify that correct procedures have been followed and initiate the reporting via PRISMS. This is done as soon as practicable, but within five days (consistent with the requirement of Section 19(2) of the ESOS Act 2000). Department of Home Affairs will automatically be alerted when VACTS reports a student to the Secretary of the Department of Education via PRISMS.

Documents to be filed

All documentation related to the reporting of the student for not meeting satisfactory course progress requirements is to be filed in the student's file. This includes:

- the details of the intervention measures implemented for the student (the intervention strategy agreement)
- the written notice informing the student of VACTS's intention to report for not making satisfactory progress and advising the student of his/her ability to access VACTS's complaints and appeals process within 20 working days (notice of intention to report for unsatisfactory course progress)
- all details of any appeals made by the student and the outcomes of the appeal process