FURTHER INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

Individual Appointments
Advocacy Service staff can provide you with individual advice and support. Contact us to make an appointment to discuss your circumstances. Please bring relevant documents with you to your appointment (for example, your notice letter from the faculty, a draft written submission, student record sent with the notice letter).

Peer Support Program
The Advocacy Service, University of Melbourne Student Union Office Bearers and some faculties are working together to have trained student volunteers available to support you at some CUPC meetings. If you’d like to know if your faculty is included, contact the Advocacy Service.

Email Help
If you are unable to come in to the office you may email your question to us at the email address below.

Website
Our website is a source of accessible and up-to-date information, including sample written submissions and links to University statutes and support services.

OTHER ISSUES THAT THE ADVOCACY SERVICE CAN HELP WITH
We provide support, referral and advice across a range of academic and personal issues such as:

- Grievances and complaints
- Special consideration
- Equitable adjustments
- Assessment disputes
- Discipline/misconduct, including plagiarism
- Information and referral on a range of other matters

Advocacy Service
The service is free, confidential and available to all students currently enrolled at the University of Melbourne. The service also provides students with the opportunity to develop skills through volunteer work.

Opening hours
9am–5pm, Monday to Friday
Please note that the office will be closed for more than a week at the Christmas/New Year period. Check the website for dates.

Contact us
Student Union Advocacy Service
Third floor, Union House
University of Melbourne

Phone
8344 6546

Email
suashelp@union.unimelb.edu.au

Website
union.unimelb.edu.au/advocacy/progress-committee

Produced by UMSU ©June 2013
union.unimelb.edu.au
The Advocacy Service has produced this brochure to help you if you are called to a Course Unsatisfactory Progress Committee (CUPC) meeting.

For coursework students, the University undertakes a review of each student’s academic progress at the end of each teaching period. This is to ensure that everyone is meeting a satisfactory standard of academic progress.

The process is different for Research Higher Degree Students. More information is available on our website: union.unimelb.edu.au/advocacy/progress-committee#RHD

Faculties and Graduate Schools usually hold CUPC meetings at the end of each semester although with courses taught by trimester or in intensive mode such as Summer and Winter School, it may happen at other times of the year. If you receive notice about a meeting (usually by email) you should take action. You should not ignore the situation because the committee will make a decision even in your absence, and you may have conditions placed on your enrolment or even lose your place in the course. For international students, making unsatisfactory progress may lead to visa cancellation. International students who are notified they have made unsatisfactory progress should seek advice from the Advocacy Service and the University’s International Student Services staff before deciding what to do in response to the University’s letter or email.

REASONS FOR UNSATISFACTORY PROGRESS
Your studies may have been affected by many issues. Think carefully about what went wrong.
Common reasons include:
• Difficulty in moving from school to university or returning to study after an absence (transition)
• Personal issues including family and relationship breakdowns, financial problems, unsuitable study environment, housing problems
• Time management
• Health problems
• Language difficulties
• Lack of motivation
• Poor study/exam techniques
• Social isolation

YOUR WRITTEN SUBMISSION
Before your meeting, you should write a submission (a letter) to the committee that explains your situation. Ideally, this should be about a page long, however you should make sure you cover all the important information. A letter is a good idea because the meetings are often very short, so it ensures that all of your points are considered and removes some of the pressure to remember everything on the spot. Some faculties or schools will send you a form to fill in. You may write a letter in addition to filling in the form. If you cannot attend your meeting you should take extra care with your letter and/or form as this is the only information from you which the committee will consider. Think carefully about how you can convince the committee that you will be successful in the course in future.

The emphasis is on what has or will change to improve your academic performance.

Your written submission should address three main issues:
1. The reason(s) why you performed poorly in one or more of your subjects. Explain the circumstances that have affected your studies clearly and in detail.
2. How are you addressing the circumstances that affected your performance? What steps are you taking to ensure you improve? These need to be achievable and realistic. All issues identified above should be addressed.
3. What would you like the committee to allow you to do?

For example, continue in your course, reduce your subject load to part time, or take a leave of absence.

You may wish to use our template submission to get started – it is available at http://union.unimelb.edu.au/advocacy/progresscommittee# sub

Once you have drafted your submission, we are able to provide feedback on this before you submit it to the faculty or school.

Please email your draft submission, a copy of the CUPC notice letter from the university, and your student record (which should be sent to you along with the notice letter) to suashelp@union.unimelb.edu.au and we will endeavour to review it and advise you of any issues or improvements you may consider in time for you to submit it by the deadline.

If you can get letters of support, or documents that provide evidence of your situation (for example, medical certificates), attach them to your submission.

THEMEETING
Meetings usually run for ten to twenty minutes but may be even shorter. At your meeting there will be at least four staff from the faculty including three senior academic staff. The Committee will have read your submission if you provided one and should be familiar with its contents. Generally you will be given a chance at the beginning of the meeting to highlight the important issues. You will usually be asked questions about your studies and your circumstances to help the Committee understand what has happened and what you are going to do to improve the situation. It is in your best interest to tell them as much as you can about what went wrong so that they can fully understand your circumstances.

You can bring someone with you for support but they are only allowed to speak with the permission of the committee.
• Prepare thoroughly before the meeting. The Advocacy Service can assist you to prepare.
• Have a friend, family member, volunteer peer support person or other support person attend the meeting with you. They can take notes, encourage you to say everything on the spot. Some faculties or schools will send you a form to fill in. You may write a letter in addition to filling in the form. If you cannot attend your meeting you should take extra care with your letter and/or form as this is the only information from you which the committee will consider. Think carefully about how you can convince the committee that you will be successful in the course in future.

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