

# Course Academic Progress (CAPC) — Coursework

## Self-help Resources for Coursework Students who have been asked to Show Cause

Each semester, the University is required by law to undertake a review of the academic progress of each of its students. Every student is deemed responsible for their own learning and is required to meet satisfactory academic standards. If these standards are not met, the University will invite you to a Course Academic Progress Committee (CAPC) meeting, often called a "Show Cause" meeting. This page is an easy-to-follow self-help guide on what to do if you are a coursework student and have received a notice about your course academic progress.

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This is only for **coursework students** - *if you are completing a higher degree by research the process is [different](#)*. For help with CAPC (Research), contact us [here](#).

## What is Course Academic Progress?

The University is required to review the progress of its students by operation of two laws - the [Higher Education Support Act 2003 \(Cth\)](#) and the [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 \(Cth\)](#). Regular reviews of students' progress helps ensure students move through their course in 'a timely manner.' The review process within the University is governed by Part 7 of the [Academic Board Regulation](#) and implemented in accordance with the [Academic Progress Review Policy \(Coursework\)](#). Meetings usually happen at the end of each semester.

The University's process for monitoring academic progress groups students into three broad categories. The first is for those who are making 'satisfactory progress' against their course requirements. These students will not be contacted about the progress. The other two categories are listed in the [Academic Progress Review Policy \(Coursework\)](#). There is a category for those who are 'At Risk' of making unsatisfactory progress, and another for those students deemed to be currently making 'Unsatisfactory Academic Progress'. There are various factors determining which category students will fall into, including whether you are enrolled in graduate or undergraduate coursework, completing an Honours year, or are enrolled in specific disciplines set out under the policy. Any correspondence from the University should indicate the category relevant to you.

## **I received an 'At Risk' notification — what now?**

So, you've received an 'At Risk' notification on or soon after you received your final results. You should have received this via your student email.

If the University has sent you an 'At Risk' notification it means that you have failed to meet the criteria for satisfactory performance during the relevant teaching period and you need to make some changes. Be assured that many students experience difficult semesters during their study and go on to successfully complete their degree. The University requires you to fill out a *Return to Good Standing Plan*, which will be sent to your student email, and you should make sure you fill out this plan thoughtfully and thoroughly. If you feel you'd like more support during this process, you can also book an 'At Risk' appointment and meet with university staff who can help you access additional services [here](#). If you're confused about this process, you can also [get in touch](#) with us here.

An 'At Risk' notice is determined once your results are published, so if you are waiting for results to be reviewed or changed, then the 'at risk' notice will remain until the changes have been formalised. If you're awaiting a Special Consideration outcome, we suggest you still complete the *Return to Good Standing Plan* unless you know if Special Consideration has been granted. However, if you've been granted a special exam through Special Consideration and have received an 'at risk' notice, we suggest you contact the University at [academic-progress@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:academic-progress@unimelb.edu.au) and explain you have been granted a special exam so your results are not yet final. Students should not be considered 'At Risk' until results for the teaching period have been released and your time should be spent preparing for your special exam.

It is important to understand that, while there is no immediate sanction arising from the 'At Risk' status, if you do not make satisfactory progress in future semesters you could be asked to attend a CAPC meeting, which can result in the termination of your enrolment.

So you should engage with the advice the University is offering you, and respond to the notification - even though it says it is optional. This process is designed to help you, and the University can't meaningfully help you if they don't know what's going on in your life.

## **What happens if I receive a 'Show Cause' notice about my progress?**

If you have received a 'Show Cause' notice from the University regarding your academic progress, it should be taken *very* seriously. The notice will be sent to you after the final release of results, and you should contain instructions on how to access your **Academic Progress portal**. Please read these instructions carefully and follow them to download your Student Record Card. You will need the Student Record Card to adequately address the 'Show Cause' Notice.

The University requires you to submit a written response to the CAPC, to set out reasons ('Show Cause') as to why you should not have your enrolment terminated. As intimidating as a 'Show Cause' notice may be, it is designed to assist you to work on ways to maximise your prospects of successfully completing your course. The University is aware of and concerned about a range of factors which can influence a student's ability to study effectively.

Alongside this response you may also be asked to attend a CAPC meeting. We strongly encourage you to attend to ensure that there are no questions left unanswered and you have the best opportunity to explain your situation.

## **How do I write the CAPC submission?**

The University asks students to fill in an online survey to answer some key questions about their academic progress in the interests of trying to streamline the high volume of submissions these committees receive. We do not believe this is sufficient on its own and encourage students to fill in the survey and attach a formal written response to the CAPC. While the survey provides some insight into your situation, a detailed written submission allows you to provide a more comprehensive response outlining not just what went wrong, but how you intend to address any issues in practical terms.

In your written submission you should explain the circumstances that lead to your current academic results and (most importantly) focus on what has or will change to improve your performance in future. It is a formal letter to the committee and should contain three main areas:

1. The reason/s why you did not do well. Explain clearly and in detail the circumstances that have affected your studies. If you have supporting documentation or evidence then it is helpful to attach this, but it is not essential.

2. How you are addressing the circumstances that affected your performance. What steps are you taking to ensure you improve? These need to be achievable and realistic. Be specific.
3. What you would 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.

One of the 'red flags' or big concerns for a committee are signs that a student lacks engagement with the University generally. You need to reassure the committee that you are willing and able to do what it takes to succeed.

Your response should directly engage with any comments on your Student Record Card that relate to your academic progress. This record contains important information about your results, and any past progress issues, including recommendations and other outcomes from previous meetings. Considering and addressing any of the issues outlined in this record will help demonstrate to the committee that you appreciate the situation fully. If you have difficulty accessing the **Academic Progress portal** after following the directions in your show cause notice, and have an approaching deadline, you should email the Academic Progress team at the University directly: [academic-progress@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:academic-progress@unimelb.edu.au).

Read your Student Record Card carefully for anything that relates to academic progress so you can address this either in your letter or in the meeting. For example, if you were invited to meet with an adviser in an 'At Risk' meeting, your Student Record Card will note this. Look for a heading 'Sanction(s)', it will say something like:

*Hold - Academic Progress Review - Effective Date 29 November 2017*

*Study Package: B-COM*

*Reason: Unsatisfactory progress*

The Student Record Card will also note if you attended the meeting or not, and if you did, it will record any recommended actions. It will look like this:

Student attended At Risk appointment

Student cited reasons for being 'At Risk' as: lack of motivation and ineffective study skills and personal/emotional issues. Self-identified the need for more structured study schedule.

Recommended: make an appointment with a counsellor and accessing online resources from CAPS; attending 'Time Management Essentials' and 'Overcoming Procrastination' workshops; using the Maths Learning Centre throughout semester; and reducing study load to 37.5 points in Sem 2.

If you did not respond to your 'At Risk' notification, it is really important you explain why, as well as provide some details about your situation. If you did respond to it, you

need to outline how you implemented the recommendations, or outline why they were perhaps not specific enough or helpful to you, explaining what you did instead.

We recommend using our [template letter](#) to get started.

## **What should I expect from the CAPC meeting?**

The meeting is not intended to be a stressful experience, but it is normal to feel nervous as it is a formal meeting with senior staff. The role of the committee is not to punish you, but to establish whether you have the capacity to finish your course and assist you with any strategies to improve in future semesters.

The meetings are quite short, normally lasting anywhere from five to 15 minutes. They are currently (as of 2022) held online. You are allowed to take a support person in with you, and this can be a friend or family member. Your support person is only allowed to speak with permission from the chair of the committee, or if they are asked a direct question.

The committee will consist of a minimum of three staff from your faculty; three senior academic staff and possibly an experienced student adviser. You will be introduced to all members and given an opportunity to state your case early on in the meeting. The committee will have a copy of your Student Record Card, your written submission, and any supporting documents you provided, so you will only need to address or summarise your main points, or discuss anything that you may have forgotten in your letter. The committee will then ask you questions if they require further information to make their decision.

Our [video](#) should help you get a sense of what to expect in the meeting itself. While a lot of things have changed since we made it, the meeting process and the committee's purpose are still the same. Unfortunately, with the switch to online meetings we can no longer offer support by way of the Peer Support Program. The committee will not tell you their decision in the meeting itself. You will be notified of the outcome by email within three working days.

## **What are the possible outcomes?**

A Course Academic Progress Committee (CAPC) may:

- a) impose conditions on the student's enrolment or academic performance in the following teaching period
- b) impose a probationary status on the student's enrolment, which may include a requirement to undertake specified actions, such as attending workshops or meetings with designated staff intended to increase the student's chance of academic success
- d) require the student to undertake specified actions to increase their chances of academic success
- e) revoke a scholarship that was awarded to the student
- f) approve a period of leave of absence for the student

- g) suspend the student's enrolment for a specified period, or
- h) terminate the student's enrolment in the course

You may be allowed to continue in your course with no restrictions on your enrolment, however, the CAPC may also recommend actions for you to take, including getting support from Academic Skills, Counselling, or Student Equity and Disability Support (SEDS). While these are only recommendations, it is in your best interests to take on any advice given to you, as failure to do so may negatively impact future decisions if you are required to attend a CAPC meeting again.

## **Will this impact my visa?**

If you are an international student, the results of a CAPC meeting could potentially impact your visa. If you are in Australia on a Student visa, it is very important not to breach any of the visa conditions. One condition of a Student visa is '8202 – Meeting Course Requirements', meaning you must maintain satisfactory attendance in your course and course progress for each study period as required by your education provider.

It is vital that all international students who are notified that they have not made satisfactory academic progress prepare carefully for the meeting and contact Stop I to speak to an International Student Advisor.

If the outcome of your CAPC meeting is to suspend your enrolment, the University must notify the Department of Home Affairs. In most cases a student can remain in Australia while suspended, however, this is not guaranteed. We suggest you ensure that you get advice from Stop I to understand how the suspension may impact your ability to stay in the country for the remainder of your course duration.

If the outcome of your CAPC meeting is to terminate your enrolment, the University must notify the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC). This notification will likely result in the cancellation of your student visa and the requirement to leave the country. It may also affect your chances of obtaining another student visa to Australia for up to three years. To understand how this operates, and when this occurs, you need to read your outcome letter carefully and contact Stop I for advice.

# What if I want to appeal the CAPC decision?

Appealing an CAPC decision is possible in some circumstances. To establish if this is the right path for you, you need to know why the CAPC made the decision that they did, as this is what you are arguing against when you lodge an appeal. The Academic Board Appeals Committee Secretary can provide you with a copy of the report made by the CAPC outlining the reasons for their decision. To obtain a copy of this report, you need to request it from the Academic Governance Unit by filling in [this form](#).

Once you have obtained the report, we suggest you read our webpage on the appeals process [here](#).

We strongly encourage you to contact us to discuss your appeal before you lodge it with the University. To assist us to help you, please prepare the following documents **prior** to contacting us:

- a draft letter of appeal
- a copy of the CAPC Appeal Report
- the outcome email sent to you after your CAPC meeting, and
- your Student Record Card (which should be available in your Academic Progress portal, or you can get a copy sent to you from the Academic Progress team).

If you contact us before you have all of these documents, we will ask you to obtain them before we can provide further advice.