



Students At Risk in the Faculty of Science Information Sheet (Sem 2, 2007)

Introduction

The University of Sydney through its Academic Board has always been concerned to develop policies and procedures that promote the welfare and well-being of students of the University.

In particular, the Academic Board recognises the value of reliably and efficiently monitoring the progress of students in their studies, and of having systems in place to promote the early detection of students who are making poor or unsatisfactory progress and are therefore at risk of exclusion from their degree.

A benefit of early detection of students in this 'at risk' category is that it allows timely intervention, and the provision of advice and assistance to support students in their ongoing studies.

Details of the Student At Risk policy may be found at:-

http://www.usyd.edu.au/secretariat/students/risk_index.shtml

Triggers used to identify Students At Risk

At the end of each semester the Faculty of Science will run a report listing all students 'at risk' based on one or a combination of the following triggers:

- 1) failure to successfully complete more than fifty percent of the credit points for which the student was enrolled in the semester or year (as appropriate) just completed;
- 2) failure to achieve a satisfactory Weighted Average Mark (WAM) in the degree course over a defined period, as specified by the Faculty;
- 3) failure to complete a mandated unit of study, field or clinical work, or practicum, as appropriate;
- 4) failure twice to pass the same unit of study;
- 5) an unsatisfactory student attendance record as entered in FlexSIS by faculties;
- 6) inability to complete their degree within the maximum permitted time while carrying a normal student load.

International Students

International Students who have been identified as at risk stage 1 are required to attend an information session with the International Student Support Unit (ISSU). The ISSU in consultation with the Faculty of Science International Student Adviser will monitor your progression. The ISSU is located on the ground floor of the Services Building, next to the International Office.

Stages in the At Risk process

There are 4 stages of 'at risk'.

Stage 1 Faculty of Science At Risk

The Faculty will write to all students listed in the At Risk Report for the first time, providing the following information and advice:

- (1) that the student has been identified as At Risk;
- (2) how the student has been identified as At Risk;

(3) that the student is required to complete a Back on Track survey, identifying and explaining any reasons for their academic performance in the preceding semester(s) being of a standard that caused them to be identified as an At Risk student.

(4) that the student is required to attend a Staying on Track Information Session, which will cover study skills and introduce the student to remedial learning services, counselling services and relevant student association representatives.

(5) that all correspondence and documents relating to the student's At Risk status will be recorded on their Progression Profile.

Students enrolled in postgraduate coursework degrees of less than two years (full-time) duration who are listed in the At Risk are required to consult an Academic Advisor and attend a Staying on Track Information Session.

[Staying on Track Survey 1](#)

[Staying on track information session](#)

Stage 2 Faculty of Science At Risk

The Faculty will write to all students listed in the At Risk Report for the second time, providing the following information and advice

- * that they have been identified as At Risk for the second time.
- * how they have been identified as At Risk for the second time.
- * that all correspondence and documents relating to their At Risk status will be recorded on their Progression Profile.
- * that they are required to complete a Staying on Track Survey (Stage 2) which will:
 - (i) invite each student to identify and explain any reasons for their academic performance in the preceding semester(s) being of a standard that caused them to be identified as an At Risk student.
 - (ii) ask that they provide information about any support services or other relevant remedial action they may have taken since they were identified as Stage 1 At Risk.
- * require students to consult with an Associate Dean. An appointment time will be allocated in February 2008.
- * that they are required to attend a Staying on Track Information Session, if they have not already done so.

Students enrolled in postgraduate coursework degrees of less than two years (fulltime) duration who are listed in the At Risk Report a second time proceed directly to stage 3.

[Staying on Track Survey 2](#)

Staying on Track stage 1 and 2 surveys can be submitted by post, fax, in person or electronically (if scanned).

Stage 3 Faculty of Science At Risk

The Faculty will write to the all students listed in an At Risk Report for the third time asking them to show good cause why they should not *be excluded* from their degree course.

The Faculty will consider and rule on whether a student has shown good cause in accordance with Division 6 of the University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule 2000 (as amended). Where a student has not established good cause, the Dean may, in accordance with clause 16 of the University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule 2000 (as amended):

- (1) exclude the student from the degree course; or
- (2) permit the student to re-enrol in the degree course subject to restrictions on units of study, which may include:
 - (i) completion of a unit or units of study within a specified time;
 - (ii) exclusion from a unit or units of study; and
 - (iii) specification of the earliest date on which a student may re-enrol in a unit or units of study.

The Faculty will normally provide reasons for their decisions in their advice to the student, and record those reasons on the Progression Profile.

Stage 4 Faculty of Science At Risk

The Faculty will automatically exclude the following students from their degree: -

- *all students listed in an At Risk report for the fourth time after having been asked to Show Cause and permitted to re-enrol after stage 3.
- *All students enrolled in award programs of two years or less (full-time) duration and listed in an At Risk Report for the third time after having been asked to Show Cause and permitted to re-enrol after stage 3.

The University [Secretariat](http://www.usyd.edu.au/secretariat) has provided a comprehensive website with information, links to related policy documents and copies of student surveys for students to access:
http://www.usyd.edu.au/secretariat/students/risk_index.shtml

Students First Enrolled Prior To 2008

The At Risk policy applies to all students from 1st January 2007. A student's record prior to 2007 is not considered when making the decision whether a student should appear on the At Risk list. Any undergraduate coursework student who appeared on the At Risk list at the end of semester 1, 2007 entered the process at Stage 1.

Students Enrolled In Specialist Undergraduate Degrees

Students in specialised Science degrees - Bachelor of Science (Nutrition), Bachelor of Science (Marine Science), Bachelor of Science (Molecular Biotechnology), Bachelor of Science (Molecular Biology and Genetics) and Advanced and Advanced Mathematics streams:

The At Risk rules supplement the existing progression rules for these degrees; they do not replace the existing progression requirements for these degrees.

Students Enrolled In Postgraduate Applied Science Coursework Degrees

The At Risk rules supplement the existing progression rules for these degrees; they do not replace the existing progression requirements for these degrees. Satisfactory progress requirements are detailed in the resolutions for each degree.

Have you been incorrectly identified as at Risk (Any stage)?

Sometimes, despite the best efforts of your Faculty, students are incorrectly identified as being At Risk. It is in your interests to let the Faculty know immediately if you have been identified incorrectly, so we can amend your record. Problems sometimes occur in the following circumstances: -

- if a student will have results amended by completing supplementary examinations
- have late results for an international exchange semester
- are eligible to graduate
- or for a small number of other reasons.

Your Progression Profile

All correspondence and documents relating to your At Risk status will be recorded on your Progression Profile which is an individual Faculty report created for all students identified as At Risk. The Faculty of Science will record on your Progression Profile information including whether you respond to the Staying on Track Survey and if you attend a Staying on Track Information Session. Your progression profile will be taken into consideration if you continue to be an At Risk student.

Frequently Asked

1. I have been identified as a stage 1, 2, 3 or 4 student 'at risk'. What do I do?

Read the information provided to students on the University Secretariat's website AND the information provided by the Faculty of Science. Take careful note of due dates for submitting documents and appeals.

2. I have been incorrectly identified as at risk stage 1 or 2 pending supplementary results, what do I do?

When your results are available on MyUni contact the At Risk Officer in the Faculty of Science to re-assess your 'at risk' status.

3. I have been incorrectly identified as at risk stage 3 or 4 pending supplementary results, what do I do?

Contact the At Risk Officer in the Faculty of Science IMMEDIATELY so your supplementary exam dates can be recorded on your progression profile.

4. I don't think I should be listed 'at risk' because I have now transferred to another faculty, suspended or discontinued.

'At Risk' is assessed on a semester by semester basis. If you were enrolled and performed poorly in the last semester you will be recorded as 'at risk' for that semester even if you transfer, suspend or withdraw. If you are 'at risk' stage 3 or 4 it is important to respond to the show cause/exclusion notice within the time frame even if you have no intention of continuing with the degree. Failure to respond may result in an exclusion which may affect your entry to studies in the future.

*5. I don't think I should be listed 'at risk' because I transferred to another faculty, suspended or discontinued **last semester**.*

If you have been sent a notice of at risk (at any stage) for a semester that you believe you were not enrolled in you should contact the Faculty of Science IMMEDIATELY.

6. I believe I have performed poorly in my semester 2 exams and I think I will be recorded as 'at risk' stage 2. What should I do?

Read the information concerning 'at risk' stage 2 above and wait for your exam results. If you progress to stage 2 you will be notified by University email.

7. I need advice, who can I speak to?

All students at the university are provided with a range of services to meet varying needs such as the SRC (<http://www.src.usyd.edu.au/>) or SUPRA (<http://www.usyd.edu.au/supra/>) as well as academic advisors and other student services.

Academic advice can be obtained from Associate Deans within the Faculty of Science and from course coordinators within each School and Department. Student Advisors in the Faculty of Science are able to provide expert information on how to change degrees, vary enrolment, semester dates and a range of other information.

The University of Sydney provides a range of student support services which can be accessed from this website:

<http://www.usyd.edu.au/stuserv/>

The Staying on Track survey lists contact details for a range of student support services.

Learning Centre

Room 722, Level 7
Education Building A35
ph: + 61 2 9351 3853
fax: + 61 2 9351 4865
Email: lc@stuserv.usyd.edu.au

Counselling Service

Room 710, Level 7
Education Building A35
ph: + 61 2 9351 2228
fax: + 61 2 9351 7055
Email: counsell@stuserv.usyd.edu.au

8. *I'm not satisfied with the decision that I am at risk or I am not satisfied with the decision to exclude me from my degree. Can I appeal it?*

- **Incorrect identification** If it is simply a case that you have been wrongly identified, just contact the At Risk officer and the Faculty of Science will rectify your record as soon as possible.
- **Internal Appeal** If you are not satisfied that due process has been followed, in the first instance, write to the Associate Dean care of the Faculty of Science Office, setting out why you believe that the Faculty has not followed the Faculty's At Risk policy correctly. You have 21 days from the date on your At Risk letter to raise an internal appeal.
- **Appeal to the Registrar** If, once you have received the Faculty's response to your internal appeal, you are still unsatisfied with the decision you can appeal to the Registrar. You must do this within 21 days of the date of the Faculty's response (or ask the Registrar to exercise discretion in relation to the date for response). Information on lodging an appeal with the Registrar can be found on the Secretariat website, www.usyd.edu.au/secretariat/students/risk_index.shtml.

Note that any student lodging an appeal should set out in writing his or her reasons, including any written evidence and written submissions, for believing that due academic process has not been observed by the Faculty in relation to the Academic Decision. Failure to follow due academic process generally means that a Faculty may have not followed the process or policy it said it would. Policy and processes can be found in the Faculty Handbook, in degree resolutions, and on information sheets like this one.

If you do lodge an appeal, you can contact the Students Representative Council (if you are an undergraduate) or SUPRA if you are a postgraduate student. These student organisations provide independent assistance and advice to students and have a great deal of experience in dealing with all kinds of student appeals.

Faculty of Science Intervention and Support Strategies

The Faculty of Science has always been concerned to develop policies that promote the welfare and well-being of students enrolled in the Faculty of Science. A number of University and Faculty rules and policies require the Faculty to intervene and support students who may be at risk of not meeting progression requirements. These policies are:-

- Any Satisfactory Progress requirements that are found in the resolutions for your particular degree
- The University's Students At Risk policy
- And for international students, the National Code for Education Providers 2007

An *intervention* is an action taken in relation to an individual student by the Faculty in applying policies that deal with satisfactory progress. An intervention can take a number of forms, but is typically a referral to particular student support services or a direction in relation to a student's studies.

A *support strategy* is a plan or process to assist an individual student or group of students within the Faculty to better achieve academic success.

All students should take advantage of the Faculty's support strategies and the University's student support services. Do not wait until you are in severe difficulties to seek assistance! The Faculty has a number of strategies and intervention possibilities in place. These include, but are not limited to, the following:-

Making available information on degree requirements in the Faculty of Science

The Faculty publishes Handbooks on an annual basis. Handbooks become available in the September prior to the calendar year, so the 2008 Handbook is available from September 2007. Handbooks are available on-line, for purchase in hardcopy format from the Student Centre, and are available at many public libraries.

Each Faculty of Science student receives an enrolment guide at in-person enrolment. These guides set out relevant contacts and degree rules. In addition, the Faculty distributes information on University student support services.

Provision of specialist administrative staff

Administrative staff are available at the Faculty of Science Office counter and by email and by telephone to assist with queries relating to degree requirements and other administrative matters. See the Faculty of Science website for opening times and contact details: www.science.usyd.edu.au

Faculty of Science Transition Workshop

To enable new first year undergraduate students to study effectively and enjoy a positive student experience, the Faculty of Science offers a Transition workshop each year. Workshops are held prior to the commencement of the academic year. Details on registration are available at enrolment sites or on the Faculty webpage at enrolment periods.

Faculty of Science Webpage

Through provision of a webpage specifically for students enrolled in the Faculty of Science, relevant information on degree requirements etc is available on demand.

Implementing progression requirements

- The Faculty administers progression requirements for undergraduate specialist degrees on an annual basis. Students who do not meet the progression requirements will be notified within 4 weeks of second semester results becoming available that they have not fulfilled satisfactory progression requirements. Students will be notified of the intervention to be implemented.
- The Faculty administers progression requirements for postgraduate coursework degrees on a semester basis. Students who do not meet the progression requirements will be notified within 4 weeks of semester results becoming available that they have not fulfilled satisfactory progression requirements. Students will be notified of the intervention to be implemented.
- The Faculty administers the University's At Risk policy on a semester by semester basis. Students are notified in accordance with the At Risk policy set out in Chapter 1 of the Faculty of Science Handbook.
- The Faculty has a staff member dedicated to administration for International Student candidatures. The International Student Adviser works closely with the International Office to facilitate compliance with the ESOS code.

Interventions

Interventions are made having regard to the particular policy or rule being applied.

Interventions include:-

- Completion of a back-on track survey by Students At Risk
- Attendance required at an information session to raise awareness of student services
- A referral to attend particular student services
- An interview with the Associate Dean or other course adviser
- Recommendations on study patterns

- Recommendation on suspension or withdrawal from study Where a student has failed to make satisfactory progress as required,

Subsequent interventions include:

- Transfer to a more appropriate degree program as provided in degree resolutions or as recommended by an Associate Dean
- Transfer to a more appropriate stream in a degree as provided in degree resolutions or as recommended by an Associate Dean
- Direction to move from full-time to part-time enrolment
- Direction to suspend studies for a period
- Mandatory attendance at specified Learning Centre courses
- Case-management on an individual student basis
- Exclusion for a specified period from a degree

Support Strategies

The Faculty supports students by:

- Making information on degree requirements easily available,
- Making information on University student support services easily available,
- Offering a Transition Workshop,
- Offering the Talented Student Program to support the development of talented Science students,
- Providing specialist administrative staff to advise on Faculty policy and procedures,
- Providing individual consultations, by appointment, with Associate Deans.
- The Schools within the Faculty of Science support students through:-
- Issuing unit of study outlines detailing requirements and learning outcomes,
- Making available specialist administrative staff to advise on School policy and procedures,
- Making available specialist academic advisers to advise on academic matters within the School.

Contact us

Further information can be obtained from:

Faculty of Science

info@science.usyd.edu.au

Counter Hours:

Mon-Thur 10am-4pm Fri 10am-1pm

Lynley Matthews

Scholarships and At Risk Officer

Faculty of Science F07

University of Sydney

NSW 2006

ph: + 61 2 9351 5386

fax: + 61 2 9351 4846

Email: lynley@science.usyd.edu.au

Aldrine Creado

International Student Adviser

Faculty of Science F07

University of Sydney

NSW 2006

ph: + 61 2 9036 9382

fax: + 61 2 9351 4846

Email: aldrine@science.usyd.edu.au