Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline policies and procedures for monitoring, evaluating and responding to variations in the progression of students through their studies.

Scope

This policy applies to IHM teaching staff and students.

Responsibility

Ultimate responsibility for student progression resides with the director of studies.

Definitions

Leave of absence

A break or intermission during which a student enrolled in a course of study is not enrolled in and does not participate in any units of study. At IHM, a leave of absence may be undertaken once during a course of study and for a duration of no more than 12 months.

Ideal progression

Ideally, students will progress through their course at a rate of two units per 12 week teaching period if enrolled part time or four units for students enrolled full time. Students may transition from part time to full time or from full time to part time at any time by following the correct
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notification procedures and their progression shall still be considered ideal, as long as they are able to complete the appropriate number of units within the required timeframe.

Satisfactory progression

Students will be considered to be progressing satisfactorily if;

- in any 12 week teaching period they have successfully completed at least one unit of study;
- they have had to withdraw from a unit to begin an intermission, participate in a special program or extracurricular activity or;
- they fail to complete a unit because of unusual circumstances that are known to teaching staff, such as death of a loved one, illness or injury, relationship problems, change in employment circumstances or any other unusual circumstance that could reasonably cause them to have difficulty concentrating on their studies.

Students at risk of unsatisfactory progression

Students’ progression will be said to be at risk if;

- they fail to complete units in two or more consecutive teaching periods without providing evidence of unusual circumstances such as those mentioned above;
- they do not enrol in any units for two consecutive teaching periods, without having applied for an intermission;
- They enrol in and fail to complete the same unit of study twice.

Students at risk of unsatisfactory progression within a unit of study

Students’ progression within a unit of study will be deemed to be at risk if;

- They have not participated actively in interaction with staff and other students within the first three weeks of the unit of study;
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- They have not submitted an assignment within five business days after its posted due date;
- They, their contract academic or other staff have raised genuine concerns as to their ability to complete the unit of study due to academic concerns.

Unsatisfactory progression

Students’ progression will be deemed unsatisfactory if;

- having been identified as being at risk of unsatisfactory progression, no substantial improvement in their progression can be achieved with additional assistance over the following two teaching periods in which they undertake units despite additional assistance being rendered;
- They do not successfully complete any units for three consecutive teaching periods in which they have enrolled in units;
- They fail more than three units;
- They fail the same unit of study three times;
- They are unable to complete the course in which they are enrolled within twice the duration allocated for part time, plus one semester.

Unsatisfactory progression within a unit of study

Students’ progression within a unit of study will be deemed to be unsatisfactory if;

- They are unable to complete the requirements of the unit of study within the 12 week teaching period plus four additional weeks for late submissions;

Principles

Prioritisation of students’ needs

IHM will, wherever possible, accommodate students’ needs and preferences with regard to progression by allowing for flexibility. Students’ requests for variations to their time profile, the
number of units in which they enrol, and for intermissions will be granted unless there is a significant reason to refuse them.

Focus on non-coercive forms of intervention

Wherever possible, progression issues will be resolved at or before the at risk level, through the use of non-coercive forms of intervention such as the rendering of additional assistance.

Procedures

Undertaking leave of absence

If a student wishes to request a leave of absence (LOA), they may do so in accordance with the following procedure:

1. Student inquires about LOA by communicating with an IHM staff member;
2. IHM staff member provides the student with a Leave of Absence Request Form or with a link to the Online Leave of Absence Request Form, upon which the conditions and maximum duration of the LOA are outlined;
3. Student completes the form and the information is submitted to the Student Registration and Administration Services Manager;
4. Student Administration and Registration Services Manager updates the details of the leave of absence, including start date and end date, into the student’s record in the Student Management System;
5. Student Administration and Registration Services Manager issues notifications of the leave of absence to the student and their course coordinator;
6. Student Support Advisor contacts the student at least two weeks prior to the end date of their leave of absence to discuss the process of returning to study and assists the student with unit selection;
7. When the end date of the leave of absence is reached, the student is issued with a notification, which includes instructions for unit selection. The student should enrol in at least one unit of study in the first available teaching period after the leave of absence and if they do not do so, their enrolment will lapse and they will need to enrol again to complete the course.
Varying a leave of absence

Any student who is on leave of absence may vary the duration of that leave of absence in accordance with the following procedure:

1. Student contacts or is referred by another staff member to the Student Administration and Registration Services Manager and indicates an intention to vary the duration of their LOA;
2. Student Administration and Registration Services Manager creates a record of the conversation and updates the end date of the LOA on the student’s record in the Student Management System;
3. Student Administration and Registration Services Manager issues a notification to the student and their course coordinator indicating the new due date and;
4. Steps 6 and 7 of the procedure for ‘Undertaking a Leave of Absence’ are delayed in accordance with the new end date.

Notifying students of unsatisfactory progression

Students will be notified of any minor progression concerns on an informal basis as a matter of course by their contract academic. Where a student has been identified by their Lecturer in consultation with the Director of Studies and Course Coordinator as being at risk or unsatisfactory progression, they will be notified in writing in the form of a letter and their details will be referred to a Student Support Advisor who will contact them by telephone to offer assistance. Where any assistance measures are to be either offered or mandated, they will be outlined in the letter. Where the student has been identified as having unsatisfactory progression, a meeting (either face to face or online) will be arranged to discuss barriers they may be facing and how they may be addressed.

Offering additional assistance and support

The most usual form of intervention that will be used to address instances of being at risk or of having unsatisfactory progression will be the offering of support and assistance to students. The
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The nature of the assistance and support will be determined by staff with specific expertise, such as academics, the Student Support Advisor and library staff. The support staff and forms of support they can provide will be outlined in the Student Support Policy.

**Mandating participation in assistance**

Where students have been deemed to fall into the unsatisfactory progression category, or where students are in the at risk category and have not taken up offers of additional assistance within the first teaching period and there has been no substantial improvement in their progression, IHM staff may make participation in an appropriate form of assistance a condition of the student’s enrolment in future units. This must be done only in order to protect the welfare of the student and to ensure that they are able to successfully complete their course of study and receive value for their fees.

**Student Support Services**

Support services made available to students will be outlined in the IHM Student Support Policy. Those services can be accessed by students either voluntarily or by referral. Students falling into at risk or unsatisfactory progression categories will be considered appropriate grounds for referral.

**Supplementary Information**

**Related policies/procedures:**
- Student Support Services Policy and Procedures
- Student Assessment Policy and Procedures
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Copyright Policy for Students

**Benchmarking:**
Not applicable

**Supporting research and analysis:**
Not applicable
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Related documents: Not applicable
Related legislation: Not applicable
Guidelines: Not applicable

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Table of Amendments

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