

Show Good Cause for coursework students

It is important to the University that students make satisfactory progress in their degree. The University also expects you to understand the requirements of your course. These requirements are outlined in the [University of Sydney Coursework Policy 2021](#) and in your faculty's policies and rules on progression located in your [faculty handbook](#) or on your faculty website.

The academic progression register

If you are identified as not meeting, or being at risk of not meeting, academic progression requirements, the University will send you an email notification, and you will be placed on the **academic progression register**. There are 3 stages of the academic progression register, which are outlined below.

If you meet progression requirements for two consecutive semesters you will be removed from the academic progression register.

Stage 1 (at risk)

You will be identified as being at risk of not meeting progression requirements if, for any semester, you:

- fail to complete more than 50% of your enrolled credit points
- fail a compulsory unit, barrier unit, field work, practicum, or other professional experience for the first time
- can't complete your course in the maximum time while enrolled in a normal study load.

All students who fail to meet academic progression requirements for the first time are sent a notice. The notice encourages students to contact an adviser to help you improve results, unless you are at risk of not completing your degree in time, in which case you **must** consult an adviser. **We recommend you take this notice seriously and participate in any activities as required.**

Stage 2 (academic caution)

If you are listed on the academic progression register for a second time, you will be issued an academic caution. This caution means you have not met progression requirements for your course.

You will be identified as having not met progression requirements for your course if:

- your completion rate is less than 50% after having attempted 48 credit points
- you fail a compulsory unit, barrier unit, field work, practicum, or other professional experience for the first second time
- if, while carrying a full-time study load, you are unable to meet the requirements of your award course within the maximum time limit.

The academic caution will outline why you have been identified as not meeting progression requirements, and the consequences of not meeting them. You will be required to consult an adviser, and the University will provide information about relevant support strategies.

Stage 3 (Show Good Cause notice)

If you appear on the academic progression register for a third time you will be asked to Show Good Cause as to why you should be allowed to re-enrol.

You will be asked to Show Good Cause if you:

- do not meet the course completion rate for a second or subsequent time
- fail a compulsory unit, barrier unit, field work, practicum, or other professional experience more than twice
- are unable to meet the course requirements within the maximum time limit while carrying a full-time study load
- have not met other required standards set out in applicable faculty resolutions
- have made recurrent applications for late DC due to special circumstances
- may not be a genuine student, if the University has reasonable ground to believe this.

It is extremely important you **read all faculty notifications** in a timely manner. If you don't understand a notification, you should contact your faculty directly using the contact details in the notification letter, or [contact us](#) for advice.

Your response to a Show Good Cause notice has a strict deadline. If you cannot submit your response in time, **request an extension** by contacting your faculty or [ask us for assistance](#).

Being asked to Show Good Cause does not mean you are automatically excluded. You **remain enrolled** in your degree until after you submit your response and an outcome is provided, or until all appeal options are exhausted.

What 'show good cause' means

To 'show good cause' means to give a good reason or explanation for not meeting your progress requirements. This often includes circumstances beyond your reasonable control such as serious ill health issues or injury, pressure of employment due to financial hardship or carer responsibilities, housing instability and other serious welfare issues.

Showing 'good cause' also means demonstrating reasonable prospects of meeting your progression requirements in the next semester. The University may take into account your previous student record and study at other institutions to demonstrate you are capable of meeting your progress requirements.

How to write a Show Good Cause response

5 steps to showing good cause

You are required to respond to a Show Good Cause notice in writing. Coursework students can use our [template letter](#) to start drafting your response.

Step 1

Read the Show Good Cause notice very carefully. The notice contains information you will need to prepare your response. It should give you lists of websites where you can get more information, a list of support services at the University, and inform you of your right to consult with and receive assistance from SUPRA. Faculty and course-specific requirements are available in the

resolutions in your [handbook](#). Talk to your faculty to help you to work out if there is anything you need to know about course-specific requirements.

Take note of the date your response is due. If you cannot submit by the due date, contact your faculty immediately to **ask for an extension**, or [ask us for assistance](#). Faculty contact details will be in your notice.

Step 2

Think about reasons to explain why you have not made sufficient progress. **You need to focus on the semester you failed.** Examples may include poor physical health; mental health difficulties; financial hardship; carer responsibilities; relationship and family problems; housing issues; harassment and discrimination issues; language and study difficulties; or pregnancy.

Make notes about each issue that impacted your academic progress.

Step 3

Once you have identified different factors that impacted your study, **think about how you might be able to overcome these issues** in the coming semesters so you can meet your progress requirements.

Look for different services that might help you achieve your plan. For example, if you had difficulties writing essays, consider enrolling in a course at the [Learning Hub](#) and submit evidence of enrolment with your Show Good Cause letter. This will demonstrate to the faculty that you have identified what was impacting your academic progress and have taken necessary steps to address the issues.

If you have actively participated in Stage 1 activities such as attending workshops or meeting an academic adviser, you should also include this in your response.

Step 4

Gather documentation to support your letter. Supporting documents may include letters from medical practitioners, counsellors or your employer. When you reference your supporting documents in your Show Cause letter, you need to clearly explain the relevance of the document. If you don't have any support documents to submit, you may consider completing a statutory declaration.

Step 5

Write your Show Good Cause response using [our template](#) as a guide. If you feel confident in your letter, you can submit your finalised letter along with any additional support documents. If you want confidential assistance from one of our professional caseworkers to review your draft, **contact us**. Send a copy of your Show Good Cause notice, your draft Show Good Cause letter saved as a Word document, and all supporting documents to us via our [contact form](#).

Make sure you keep a copy of your Show Good Cause response after you submit it. **A result will generally be provided within 2–3 weeks.** It is important to remember that until the faculty makes a decision, you remain an enrolled student. **You must continue attending classes and studying as normal.**

What to do if you don't think you can't Show Good Cause

Some students fail to meet their progress requirements because they struggled to manage their study load or did not perform well in exams, and don't believe these are a good explanation to include in a Show Good Cause response.

Our advice is to **explain in detail the academic issues that affected you throughout the semester**. Discuss any strategies you used to deal with these issues, such as attending workshops, or talking to your tutors and professors. The second half of your letter should demonstrate how you will overcome these issues. You could include an academic plan, health plan, plans to make lifestyle changes, and workshops you intend to enrol in with the [Learning Hub](#).

Submit a response to a Show Good Cause notice, even if you don't plan to re-enrol

You should respond and attempt to show cause even if you do not want to continue in your current course. Failure to respond to a Show Good Cause letter will lead to exclusion from the course, which **might affect your chances of gaining entry back into the University of Sydney or other universities in future.** When you apply for entry to a university course in Australia you will

usually be required to declare whether you have been previously excluded from a course of study.

What to do if you are an international student

If you're an international student on a student visa, be sure to check and understand the visa implications of failing to show good cause. If you are not successful in your show cause response, **the University is required to contact the Department of Home Affairs, which will lead to cancellation of student visas.**

If you need visa advice you can [contact us](#), our Legal Service can help.

If you only need information you can consult the University's [international student compliance officers](#):

student.compliance@sydney.edu.au
1800 SYD UNI (1800 793 864).

What happens next

After you submit your Show Good Cause letter, your faculty will inform you of the outcome. There are 3 possible outcomes:

1. You have shown good cause and are permitted to continue in your course.
2. You have not shown good cause but are permitted to re-enrol with conditions. This means you are allowed to continue your studies but will need to follow **specific conditions**, which may include meeting with an academic advisor or reducing your study load. Conditions are different for each student.
3. You have not shown good cause and are excluded from your course.

Appealing a decision

You have the right to appeal against being placed on the academic progression register, any conditions placed on your re-enrolment, or against exclusion for not showing good cause. [Read our article on academic appeals.](#)

If you improve in the future

In many cases your next semester will be trouble free and you will pass all your units. If you pass 2 consecutive semesters, you will be removed from the academic progression register.

Assistance and advice

If you need assistance with your Show Good Cause letter or need assistance to appeal against exclusion, [contact us](#). If you would like feedback on your draft letter, our caseworkers will be happy to assist. Please contact us as soon as possible, and attach the following:

- your Show Good Cause notice
- your draft response letter
- any supporting documents
- any relevant correspondence with your faculty.

Templates

Use our templates to draft your response to a Show Good Cause notice, or to appeal a decision by the faculty or Student Appeals Body:

- [template Show Good Cause letter](#)
- [template application for review against exclusion](#)
- [template appeal to the Student Appeals Body](#).

Policies

[University of Sydney Coursework Policy 2021](#)

- Parts 15 and 16 include University-wide provisions setting out the academic progression support and warning system, and the powers to ask students to show good cause and exclude in cases where good cause is not shown.

[University of Sydney \(Student Appeals Against Academic Decisions\) Rule 2021 \(As Amended\)](#)

- This Rule sets out procedures for appealing against academic decisions of faculties including the decision to exclude a student from candidature. The University provides information about [how it works](#).

[Faculty handbooks](#)

- Some postgraduate programs have further progress rules in faculty handbooks and in the course resolutions.

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