

ACADEMIC RULES

Preliminary

1. These Rules may be cited as the University of the Sunshine Coast Academic Rules.
2. These Rules are divided as follows:

PRELIMINARY

ADMISSION RULES

ENROLMENT RULES

ASSESSMENT RULES

PROGRESSION RULES

UNSATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND EXCLUSION RULES
3. In these Rules, except insofar as the context or subject matter otherwise indicates or requires:

"Academic year" means two semesters or three sessions

"Dean" means the Dean responsible for the relevant program of study and includes a person acting, for the time being, in the position

"Semester" may be taken to mean session where appropriate
4. These Rules apply to undergraduate, honours and postgraduate coursework programs of the University only.

Admission Rules

Undergraduate Admission

1. Applicants may be considered for admission to undergraduate programs under one or more of the following categories:
 - 1.1 Year 12 Qualifications
 - 1.1.1 Applicants who have completed Queensland Year 12 and either qualified for an Overall Position (from 1992) or a Tertiary Entrance Score (prior to 1992).

- 1.1.2 Applicants who have completed Queensland Year 12 but did not qualify for an Overall Position or Tertiary Entrance Score.
- 1.1.3 Applicants who have completed External Senior, obtaining results in 5 subjects (or 4 subjects if 21 years or older on or before 31 December of the year in which the last relevant result was obtained).
- 1.1.4 Applicants who have obtained results in one, two or three External Senior subjects and are aged 21 or over by 31 December of the year in which the last relevant results were obtained.
- 1.1.5 Applicants who have completed an interstate Australian Year 12 qualification or overseas qualification comparable to completion of Queensland Year 12.

1.2 Bridging Studies

- 1.2.1 Applicants who have completed or partially completed the Certificate of Adult Tertiary Preparation with results in a minimum of two subjects.
- 1.2.2 Applicants who have completed or partially completed other approved Bridging programs.

1.3 Tertiary Study

Applicants who have completed or partially completed recognised tertiary study at an approved institution.

1.4 Alternative Entry qualifications

- 1.4.1 Applicants who possess professional qualifications.
- 1.4.2 Applicants who can demonstrate paid vocational experience.
- 1.4.3 Applicants who submit a personal competencies statement based on life experience and which addresses specific criteria.
- 1.4.4 Applicants who obtain results in the Special Tertiary Admissions Test.

2. Supplementary Admission Schemes

Applicants allocated an Overall Position (OP) or rank based on qualifications considered in Section 1 may be eligible for further consideration of their application under one of the following schemes. These schemes may add one or more additional OPs or ranks to an OP or rank allocated for qualifications under Section 1.

2.1 Special Consideration

One or more additional OPs or ranks may be granted to applicants who provide a documented request for special consideration which substantiates at least a significant impact on prior educational outcomes.

2.2 Regional Preference Scheme

An addition of one OP or 2 ranks shall apply to applicants who:

- are currently undertaking full-time study; and
- reside in, or attend a school in, the Sunshine Coast region (bounded by the local government areas of Caboolture, Kilcoy, Caloundra, Maroochy, Noosa and Cooloola); and
- apply to University of the Sunshine Coast through QTAC.

3. Additional Admission Requirements

3.1 Applicants considered for admission under Section 1 must also satisfy other requirements, if any, specified in the rules of individual programs, except at the discretion of the relevant Dean.

3.2 English Proficiency

In order to be considered for admission, applicants whose first language is other than English must demonstrate a level of English proficiency deemed sufficient to successfully undertake the relevant program.

4. Appeals

Applicants may lodge a formal appeal to have the outcome of their application reviewed.

Appeals shall be submitted in writing to the Director, Student Affairs and must state the grounds for the appeal and be submitted no later than two weeks from the date of the final QTAC offer round.

5. Special Admission

In exceptional circumstances applicants who do not otherwise qualify for admission, but who are able to demonstrate other relevant qualifications or experience considered by the Dean to demonstrate an ability to successfully undertake the program may be considered for admission under this category.

Requests for special admission must be fully documented and shall be submitted in writing to the Director, Student Affairs in addition to submitting an application through QTAC.

Admission to non-award programs

6. Applications for admission to non-award programs shall be submitted in such form as the Deputy Vice-Chancellor may determine.

6.1 Admission as a Cross-Institution Student

Applicants undertaking an award program at another Commonwealth-funded tertiary institution may be considered for admission to individual courses subject to the following:

- approval being obtained from the home institution; and
- applicants satisfying any prerequisites for the specified course(s); and
- availability of places for the specified course(s).

6.2 Admission as a Visiting Student

Applicants may undertake individual courses for professional or personal development as a visiting student. Visiting students receive normal instruction, assessment and examination results in such courses but are not registered to undertake an award program.

Applicants may be considered for admission to individual courses based on qualifications presented with an application, subject to:

- educational background or other relevant experience considered by the Dean as being suitable for the specified course(s); and
- availability of places for the specified course(s); and
- applicants whose first language is other than English demonstrating a level of English proficiency deemed sufficient to successfully undertake the specified course(s).

6.3 Admission as a Study Abroad Student

Applicants undertaking an award program at an overseas institution may be considered for admission as a Study Abroad student, subject to:

- approval being obtained from the home institution;
- applicants satisfying the minimum entry requirements;
- applicants satisfying any prerequisites for the specified courses;
- applicants enrolling on a full time basis; and
- applicants whose first language is other than English demonstrating a level of English proficiency deemed sufficient to successfully undertake the program.

Postgraduate Admission

7. Applicants will be considered for admission to postgraduate programs under one of the following categories:

- 7.1 Standard Entry

Applicants who meet the requirements specified in the program rules will be considered for admission under this category.

- 7.2 Special Admission

In exceptional circumstances applicants who do not meet the requirements specified in the program rules but who are able to demonstrate other relevant qualifications and / or professional experience may be considered for admission under this category.

Admission with Advanced Standing

8. Admission with advanced standing may be granted in recognition of prior academic work or other work identified as being of equal depth and academic rigour.
9. Application for advanced standing should be made to the Director, Student Affairs prior to enrolment but applications at other times may be considered.
10. For programs the duration of which is two years of equivalent full-time study or greater, credit may be granted to a maximum of two-thirds of the total units required for completion of the specified program at University of the Sunshine Coast.
11. For programs the duration of which is less than two years of equivalent full-time study, credit may be granted to a maximum of one half of the total units required for completion of the specified program at University of the Sunshine Coast.
12. As a general rule advanced standing will not be given for studies completed more than ten years prior to an application for advanced standing. However, where the relevant Dean judges that studies completed more than ten years prior to an application for advanced standing are still relevant to the program for which advanced standing is being sought, then the Dean may waive the general rule.
13. The amount of prior advanced standing accepted must be confirmed by the student no later than the census date of the student's second semester of full-time enrolment or its equivalent for part-time students.

Enrolment Rules

1. A person shall be deemed to be an enrolled student following:
 - 1.1 an offer of admission;
 - 1.2 completion by the person of an appropriate enrolment form;
 - 1.3 authorised registration in courses;
 - 1.4 payment of required program fees; and
 - 1.5 entry of the person's name on the Roll of Students.
2. Enrolment shall be held at a time and place specified by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.
3. A person who enrolls or re-enrolls after the date specified shall pay a late enrolment fee unless the late fee is waived by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.
4. Only in exceptional circumstances, as determined by the Academic Board, may a person enrol or re-enrol more than three (3) weeks after the commencement of the semester.
5. A person shall remain an enrolled student until the date specified by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for re-enrolment unless the person completes, withdraws from, is precluded from, or is deemed to have abandoned study in their program of study.
6. An enrolled student's enrolment shall be cancelled if the qualifications or other information on which the student's admission was based cannot be supported by documentary or other evidence when such evidence is requested.
7. A student, having met the requirements for an award of the University, shall not be permitted to enrol in the same award or any named variant of that award.

Assessment Rules

Methods of Assessment

1. The methods of assessment in a course shall be approved by the Academic Board and shall be consistent with the aims and objectives of the program in which the course is located.
2. The method, pattern and proportion of assessment for each course shall be communicated to each student in writing by the examiner for the course as part of the course outline within the first week of teaching of that course.

Grades of Results

3. The results achieved by a student in each course shall be graded as one of the following:

HIGH DISTINCTION	(HD)
DISTINCTION	(DN)
CREDIT	(CR)
PASS	(PS)
PASS UNGRADED	(PU)
FAIL	(FL)

4. Grades shall be awarded on the following basis:

- 4.1 HIGH DISTINCTION - where a student achieves an exceptionally high level of performance and / or competence plus the production of original work and demonstrated awareness of all significant elements of the course.
- 4.2 DISTINCTION - where a student achieves a high level of performance and / or competence plus the production of original work and demonstrated awareness of all significant elements of the course.
- 4.3 CREDIT - where a student achieves a level of performance and / or competence substantially above the minimum requirements of the course.
- 4.4 PASS - where a student achieves a level of performance and / or competence which satisfies the minimum requirements of the course.
- 4.5 PASS UNGRADED - where a student has satisfied the minimum requirements of the course but it is not appropriate to differentiate between levels of satisfactory performance and / or competence.
- 4.6 FAIL - where a student has not satisfied the minimum requirements of the course.

Grading Notations

5. There shall be the following grading notations:

WITHDRAWN WITHOUT PENALTY	(WN)
WITHDRAWN - FAIL	(WF)
INCOMPLETE	(IN)

GRADE PENDING	(GP)
SPECIAL EXAMINATION	(SE)
SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION	(SU)
NOT EXAMINED	(NE)
RESULT WITHHELD	(RW)
EXEMPTION	(EX)

6. Grading notations shall be used in the following circumstances:
- 6.1 WITHDRAWN WITHOUT PENALTY - where a student has withdrawn from the course within the permitted time or on determination of the Dean.
 - 6.2 WITHDRAWN-FAIL - where a student withdraws from the course after the permitted time and has not satisfied the minimum requirements of the course.
 - 6.3 INCOMPLETE - where a student has been given an extension of time on compassionate or academic grounds by the relevant assessor.
 - 6.4 GRADE PENDING - where it is not possible for a grade to be given to a student as a result of exceptional administrative circumstances on the part of the University.
 - 6.5 SPECIAL EXAMINATION - where a student has been awarded a Special Examination on compassionate or medical grounds by the relevant assessor.
 - 6.6 SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION - where a student has marginally failed to meet the minimum requirements of the course and has shown, through results obtained in other pieces of assessment, a sufficient level of performance and/or competence to warrant setting additional assessment. The subsequent grade of result awarded after completion of a supplementary examination cannot exceed that of 'Pass'.
 - 6.7 NOT EXAMINED - where the course extends over more than one semester and no grade has been assigned to the student during the current assessment period.
 - 6.8 RESULT WITHHELD - where the student has outstanding fees or charges administered by the University or outstanding fees collected by the University on behalf of the Student Guild or is subject to disciplinary proceedings and the results achieved by the student are withheld pending resolution.

- 6.9 EXEMPTION - where the student has undertaken prior academic work which is at least equivalent in content and rigour to the course and an exemption has been approved in accordance with University policy.
7. For the purposes of Section 6 the permitted time is:
- 7.1 by 31 March in the case of first semester or year long courses;
- 7.2 by 31 August in the case of second semester courses;
- 7.3 by the fourth week of the third semester in the case of third semester courses; or
- 7.4 in the case of block release programs, having completed 20% of the prescribed course of study as specified in the approved program documentation, unless extended by the Dean by reason of exceptional circumstances.

Finalisation of Results

8. Courses which have been assigned an 'Incomplete' or 'Special Examination' or 'Supplementary Examination' or 'Grade Pending' notation are to be resolved no later than the end of the first week of the following semester otherwise they shall be converted to 'Fail'. The Academic Board may, on the recommendation of the Dean that exceptional circumstances exist, grant a specified extension of time for the finalisation of an outstanding result.
9. For students undertaking approved studies at institutions outside Australia, the relevant Dean may grant a specified extension of time for the finalisation of outstanding results and shall advise the Director, Student Affairs accordingly.

Examiners

10. Except as provided in Section 11 an examiner shall be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor for each course offered.
11. For the purposes of any research component of postgraduate programs, the committee responsible for the administration of postgraduate research students shall be the examiner.
12. In addition to any responsibilities imposed by these Rules examiners shall be responsible for:
- 12.1 the certification of results as correct for that particular course;
- 12.2 the transmission of results to the relevant Board of Examiners; and
- 12.3 such other matters as directed by the Academic Board or the relevant Board of Examiners.

Board of Examiners

13. A Board of Examiners shall be constituted for each program of study.
14. Each Board of Examiners shall be chaired by the relevant Dean and shall include all examiners who are responsible for a course within that program of study.
15. The Board of Examiners shall:
 - 15.1 meet at the conclusion of each assessment period;
 - 15.2 review and certify results lodged in each course for that assessment period;
 - 15.3 determine the academic status of each student registered in the award;
 - 15.4 in exceptional circumstances, and following consultation with the relevant examiner, vary the result initially lodged for the course;
 - 15.5 recommend to the Academic Board the students who have satisfied the requirements for an award; and
 - 15.6 advise the Director, Student Affairs of the outcome of its deliberations.

Publication

16. On receipt of the certified results the Director, Student Affairs shall release personal results to each student in a form and at a time determined by the Director, Student Affairs.
17. A course grade shall not be conveyed to a student except in writing by the Director, Student Affairs.

Appeals

18. A student may appeal to the Dean for a re-mark of an examination paper or any other component of the total assessment of a course.
19. Appeals shall be in writing, must state the grounds supporting the appeal, and be in such form as the Director, Student Affairs may determine. Applications must be submitted no later than 10 working days following the release of the relevant result.
20. Except with the permission of the relevant Dean, or as approved in outlines, students may not submit an item of work more than once for assessment.

Conferral of Awards

21. The Academic Board shall determine those students who are eligible for admission to and conferral of an award of the institution.
22. An award will not be conferred where a student has outstanding fees or charges administered by the University or outstanding fees collected by the University on behalf of the Student Guild, outstanding or overdue library items, outstanding university equipment or is subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Progression Rules

Normal Progression

1. Under normal progression a full-time student shall undertake 48 units of course work per semester as detailed in the schedule of the specific program.
2. Under normal progression a part-time student shall undertake 24 units of course work per semester as detailed in the schedule of the specific program.
3. Undergraduate students will be required to have successfully completed all Core Courses by the end of their second year of enrolment or its equivalent for part-time students.

Variation of Normal Progression

4. Subject to section 5 below, permission to vary the normal pattern of progression may be granted at the discretion of the Dean.
5. A student will not be permitted to undertake course work that exceeds that for normal progression by more than one-quarter in any semester other than with the approval of the Academic Board.

Variation of Program Requirements

6. In exceptional circumstances the Dean may grant minor variation from the requirements of an accredited degree program where such variation will not compromise the academic integrity of the program.

Maximum Time for Completion

7. Unless program rules specify otherwise, students must complete the requirements for an undergraduate degree including a combined degree within a period not greater than 10 years. Periods of leave of absence shall be counted for the purposes of calculating the maximum time for completion.
8. Maximum completion times for Masters by Coursework and subsidiary programs are:

- (i) for Masters by Coursework, 6 academic years or 12 semesters. No more than 6 semesters of leave, and no more than 2 semesters of consecutive leave, may be taken;
- (ii) for Graduate Diplomas, 4 academic years or 8 semesters. No more than 4 semesters of leave, and no more than 2 semesters of consecutive leave, may be taken;
- (iii) for Graduate Certificates, 2 academic years or 4 semesters. No more than 2 semesters of leave may be taken.

Periods of leave of absence will not be counted as part of the maximum completion time.

- 9. For an honours program that is normally 1 year of full-time study the maximum completion time is 2 years. Periods of leave of absence shall be counted for the purposes of calculating the maximum time for completion.

Failure

- 10. A student who has successfully completed one half or more of the courses undertaken in a given semester may progress to the next semester.
- 11. A student who fails more than one half of the courses undertaken in a given semester shall be identified as at risk of exclusion on the grounds of unsatisfactory academic performance in accordance with the Unsatisfactory Academic Performance and Exclusion Rules.
- 12. A student who fails a required course shall repeat the course when it next becomes available (and for Core Courses, within the first two years of study for full-time students or four years for part-time students) or, with the approval of the Dean, substitute another course for the failed course in accordance with the schedule of the specific program.
- 13. A student shall not be permitted to enrol for a course if the student has already failed that course three times unless it is a required course for the program and the student is otherwise directed.

Leave of Absence

- 14. Leave of absence may be granted where a student, owing to the force of circumstances, is required or finds it necessary to absent himself or herself from the program of study.
- 15. Leave of absence may be granted for periods of up to one academic year on the approval of the Dean. Periods of leave greater than one academic year may be granted by the Dean in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances.
- 16. Leave of absence will not be granted by the Dean in the first semester of the first year of a program of study, other than in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances.

17. Where leave of absence is granted after the dates specified in Assessment Rule 7, the student's results will show "Withdrawn - Fail" except where the Director, Student Affairs, on advice from the Dean, is satisfied that the circumstances merit otherwise.
18. Leave of absence will not be granted if the effect is to extend the duration of study past the maximum time available for completion.
19. A request for leave of absence must be submitted in the appropriate form to the Director, Student Affairs and shall have effect from the date of approval.

Withdrawal

20. Notification of withdrawal from a program or a course must be submitted in the appropriate form to the Director, Student Affairs and shall have effect from the date of receipt.
21. A student withdrawing from a program shall be considered as also withdrawing from all courses in which the student is registered in connection with the program.
22. A student withdrawing from all courses shall be considered as also withdrawing from the program in which the student is registered in connection with those courses.
23. A student may withdraw without failure from any or all courses by the dates specified in Assessment Rule 7.
24. A student withdrawing from any or all courses after the dates specified in Assessment Rule 7 shall be graded as "Withdrawn - Fail" in any course for which the student has not satisfied the minimum requirements except where the Director, Student Affairs, on advice from the Dean, is satisfied that the circumstances merit otherwise.

Unsatisfactory Academic Performance and Exclusion Rules

1. At risk of exclusion: students are expected to maintain a satisfactory level of performance in their studies. A student will be identified as at risk of exclusion on the grounds of unsatisfactory academic performance at the end of a semester if:
 - 1.1 the student fails for the second time a course that is required for the program in which the student is enrolled; or
 - 1.2 the student fails more than one half of the courses undertaken during that semester; or

- 1.3 the student has not successfully completed all Core Courses by the end of second year (or equivalent position for part-time students) where applicable.
2. Monitored enrolment: A student who is identified as at risk of exclusion will be placed on monitored enrolment and advised accordingly in writing.
3. A student who is at risk of exclusion is encouraged to discuss their progress with their Program Advisor and enrol as their Program Advisor recommends. They are also encouraged to seek assistance to address their academic progression from the academic staff responsible for the program in which the student is enrolled or from Student Services.
4. The academic performance of students identified as being at risk of exclusion will be monitored at the end of each semester for a period of one full academic year from the date of being identified as at risk. Where academic performance is deemed unsatisfactory at the end of any semester during this period of monitored enrolment pursuant to 1.1, 1.2 or 1.3 of these Rules, the student will be advised in writing. Where either of Rules 6.1 or 6.3 become effective during a period of monitored enrolment, a student may be excluded at the end of a semester during that period .
5. Where a student successfully applies for leave of absence during a period of monitored enrolment, the monitored enrolment will be extended to cover the leave of absence.
6. Exclusion: A student will be excluded on the following grounds:
 - 6.1 if the student fails for the third time a course that is required for the program in which the student is enrolled; or
 - 6.2 if at the end of a period of monitored enrolment the student's academic performance in their most recent semester of enrolment remains unsatisfactory in terms of either Rules 1.2 or 1.3; or
 - 6.3 if the student fails to satisfy the requirements for a program within the maximum completion time permitted.
7. An exclusion under Rule 6 shall normally be for a period of one (1) academic year.
8. A period of exclusion shall commence from the end of the assessment period in which exclusion was imposed.
9. A student who has been excluded from a program shall be so advised in writing, and advised of their right of appeal. This advice shall be forwarded to the student's last known mailing address.
10. A person who has been excluded from a program shall be ineligible for admission to any award program during the period of exclusion. A person who has been excluded from a program shall be ineligible for admission to

any non-award program during the period of exclusion except at the discretion of the Dean of the Faculty responsible for the award program.

11. A student who has been excluded from a program may apply for re-admission following the period of exclusion and shall not be entitled to any special priority.
12. Appeals: A student may appeal against exclusion. Appeals must be received within 10 working days of receipt of the notice of exclusion.
13. A student's appeal against exclusion must be in writing, must provide the reasons why they should not be excluded, and must include any appropriate documentary evidence. Evidence should attest to attempts made by the student to address the issue(s) which had previously impeded their performance such as lack of motivation, personal relationship or health problems, language or learning difficulties or financial hardship.
14. The Academic Board shall establish an Exclusion Appeals Committee to consider student appeals against exclusion under section 6 of these Rules.
15. The Exclusion Appeals Committee shall comprise:
 - (a) A member of the Academic Board appointed by the Academic Board (Chairperson);
 - (b) A member of the academic staff nominated by the Chairperson of the Academic Board;
 - (c) A member of the general staff nominated by the Chairperson of the Academic Board from expressions of interest received;
 - (d) The Manager, Student Services (ex officio).
16. Any member of an Exclusion Appeals Committee who was directly involved in any assessment under appeal must disclose this to the Committee and must abstain from voting in that student's case.
17. In the event that a member of the Exclusion Appeals Committee is unavailable to attend an exclusion appeal hearing, the Chairperson of the Academic Board may appoint another person to act as a member of the Committee.
18. The Exclusion Appeals Committee may call for such reports or interview such persons, including the student, as it deems necessary and shall, except as otherwise required by these Rules, determine its own procedures.
19. If invited to attend an exclusion appeal hearing, the student may be assisted or represented by a student colleague or a member of staff nominated by the student.
20. The Exclusion Appeals Committee shall determine whether a student's exclusion under Rule 6 will be upheld.

21. The Exclusion Appeals Committee shall determine any variation to these Rules in individual cases.
22. The Exclusion Appeals Committee shall report the outcomes of its deliberations to the next meeting of the Academic Board.
23. The Director, Student Affairs shall advise the student of the outcome of the student's appeal in writing. This advice will be forwarded to the student's last known mailing address.

Approved by: Council C95/64, 29.11.95

Last revised: Council C02/106 and C02/107, 26.11.02