

STUDENT STUDY LOAD POLICY

Approving authority	Academic Board
Purpose	This policy outlines the requirements for monitoring, managing and reporting on student study load, duration, and completion.
Responsible Officer	Academic Leadership team (Academic Dean and Head of Academic Programs)
Next scheduled review	April 2031
Document Location	http://www.ozford.edu.au/higher-education/policies-and-procedures/
Associated documents	Admissions Policy and Procedure Academic Progress Policy and Procedure Completion within Expected Duration of Study Policy and Procedure Deferring, Suspending or Cancelling a Student's Enrolment Policy and Procedure Records Management Policy and Procedure Student Grievances and Appeals Policy and Procedure Time limits for Completion of an Award Course Policy

1. PRINCIPLES

This policy defines full-time study load and establishes requirements for monitoring, managing and reporting on student study load, duration, and completion.

It also sets out student responsibilities and rights regarding their study load, duration and completion.

The Institute's monitoring responsibility and international student responsibility to complete their studies within the duration of their course, as registered on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS), are required by the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (Cwlth), the Department of Home Affairs and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (National Code) 2018 (Cwlth).

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff and to all students applying to study with the Institute or currently enrolled at the Institute.

3. DEFINITIONS

Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)

The Confirmation of Enrolment (also called a CoE) is an official statement from the Institute via PRISMS that lists the student's details, course and the start and end dates of the course.

The Confirmation of Enrolment (COE) is an official document issued to international students by universities and other education providers in Australia. It confirms that the student has accepted a place in a course and has paid the required tuition fees and Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC). The COE is required by the Department of Home Affairs for the purpose of issuing a student visa.

Compassionate or Compelling Circumstances

Compassionate or compelling circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the student and which have an impact upon the student's course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but are not limited to:

- serious illness or injury where a medical certificate states that the student is unable to attend class;
- bereavement for the death of close family members such as parents or grandparents (documented evidence must be provided);
- serious illness, accident or family incident that requires immediate travel, which has impacted the student's studies;
- the inability to begin study on the course commencement date stated on the CoE due to a delay in receiving a student visa if relevant;
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring their immediate travel and this has impacted on the student's studies;
- a traumatic experience supported by police or a psychologist's reports, which could include but is not limited to:
 - involvement in or witnessing of an accident; or
 - a crime committed against the student; or
 - the student being a witness to a crime and this has impacted on the student.
- where the Institute was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit.

Notes:

- *misreading the examination timetable, examination anxiety or returning home will not be accepted as Compassionate and Compelling circumstances;*
- *religious or faith-based issues are not in themselves grounds for special consideration. However, they may be used in support of an application that meets the Compassionate and Compelling circumstances set out above.*

Full time Study Load

A Fully Time Study load at the Institute is 4 Units or 40 Credits.

Minimum Study Load

The minimum enrolment load for any international student on a study visa, in any compulsory trimester, is 4 Units or 40 Credits, except during the student's final trimester of study.

Maximum Study Load

The maximum study load is 5 units or 50 Credits.

4. POLICY

- 4.1. The Institute's standard study load aligns with national and international standards and is consistent with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021. It also facilitates compliance with professional accrediting standards.
- 4.2. The Institute has three trimesters. Each trimesters have 12 weeks.
- 4.3. Trimester 1 and Trimester 2 are mandatory trimesters and all international students on a study visa must enrol into a full study time load as set out in the *Student Study Load Policy*.
- 4.4. Trimester 3 is optional. Students undertaking an enrolment in trimester 3 that is in additional to the full-time load are not considered to be overloading.
- 4.5. Full-time student status is determined by the study load undertaken in each trimester over an academic year. The standard study load ensures that international students comply with visa conditions for progression and completion as ESOS legislation requires.
- 4.6. A standard full-time academic load for higher education qualifications is defined by an overall enrolment load of 40 credit points taken over the three trimesters of an academic year.
- 4.7. Domestic students may be classified as full-time if the student has an enrolment of no less than 75 per cent of a standard full-time academic load of 40 credit points taken over an academic year. A domestic student enrolled for at least 40 credit points for each of the compulsory trimesters (Trimester 1 and Trimester 2) of an academic year is carrying a full-time load. A student enrolled for 40 credit points in a single trimester may be classified as full-time for that trimester.
- 4.8. International students must enrol into a full-time load (no less than 40 or 20 credit points) in their first trimester of study, unless otherwise approved. All new commencing international students will be pre-enrolled by the Admissions Team in their first four units of study, except for some onshore students who are changing course or have undertaken studies at another Australian institution.
- 4.9. International students must enrol in both compulsory trimesters (Trimester 1 and Trimester 2) and attempt a standard full time academic load of 80 credit points in each academic year.
- 4.10. It is the student's responsibility to ensure they maintain a full-time load each academic year to ensure they are in a position to complete their studies within the specified duration of the Confirmation of Enrolment, and do not put their enrolment and student visa at risk.
- 4.11. International students who are given permission to undertake less than a standard full-time academic load of 40 credit points, in the compulsory trimesters (Trimester 1 and 2), must enrol in the non-compulsory trimester (Trimester 3) to ensure a load of 80 credit points for each academic year. Not all units are available in Trimester 3, therefore, students must seek permission before under-enrolling in the compulsory trimesters.

Online Units

- 4.12. International students are not permitted to enrol in more than one third of the student's total units of their respective courses via online learning. If studying in Australia, these students are not permitted to enrol exclusively in online units in any compulsory trimester.
- 4.13. Students are not permitted to enrol in an online unit if the unit is also offered by the campus for the trimester.

- 4.14. The one third allowable by online learning will be reduced for the overall course if a student is awarded advanced standing.
- 4.15. Exceptions may be permitted with formal approval from the Academic Leadership team where such enrolment does not result in a breach of the student's visa in the following circumstances only:
- the student has been awarded advanced standing (credit for prior learning), and there is no available unit in that study trimester which will contribute to the course ; or
 - the student has not passed the required prerequisite units to allow further enrolment), and there is no available unit in that study trimester which will contribute to the course, or
 - due to unforeseen circumstances, the Unit cannot be made available to study on campus in the relevant trimester.

Placements and Internships

- 4.16. International students who have placements or internships as part of their course must ensure they meet all enrolment and document submission deadlines. In many cases, these deadlines will be prior to the regular enrolment cut-off dates.
- 4.17. It is the student's responsibility to ensure these deadlines are met to enable them to complete their course within the duration of their Confirmation of Enrolment as set out in the *Academic Progress Policy and Procedure*.
- 4.18. Students who fail to meet the enrolment and/or document submissions deadlines may not be eligible for a Confirmation of Enrolment extension.

Overloading

- 4.19. Overloading is enrolment in more subjects during a given study period than your course usually permits. For most courses, this means taking more than 40 credit points in a trimester.
- 4.20. Overloading your enrolment will increase the study commitment and workload during the study period, which may impact on future results. Enrolling in more than 4 units or 40 credit points per trimester is therefore not recommended.
- 4.21. For an international student on a student visa, due to visa requirements overloading is only allowed in exceptional circumstances. Overloading will affect the duration of studies and may cause a reduced enrolment load later in the course.
- 4.22. Overloading, to the maximum of 5 Units or 50 points, is normally limited to students who are in their final trimester or who have obtained consistently good results. The student must demonstrate the capacity to deal with:
- additional assessment requirements
 - increased time commitment for study
 - potential timetable clashes
 - the impact on academic goals

- the effect overloading may have on other activities including part-time work, internships, sports, or social activities, or carer responsibilities.
 - the effect increased study load may have on wellbeing.
- 4.23. If the student is approved to overload the enrolment, the student is not able to request extensions, special consideration or remission of debt in special circumstances on the grounds of workload.
- 4.24. A student may be approved to overload if:
- has a course Weighted Average Mark (WAM) of at least 70%, and
 - has completed a full-time study load of at least 40 Credit points during the previous trimester, and
 - received no fails during the last two trimesters studied.
- 4.25. There are no fees for the process of overloading, however tuition fees apply for each Unit the student is enrolled in.
- 4.26. If overloading requests are refused, the response to the student will provide the reason for refusal and the students' right to access the appeal process within 20 working days in accordance with the Institute's *Student Grievances and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

Monitoring

- 4.27. The Institute monitors the enrolment load of international students studying on a student visa to ensure that at all times they are in a position to complete their course within the duration specified in their Confirmation of Enrolment as set out in the *Completion within Expected Duration of Study Policy and Procedure* and the *Time limits for Completion of an Award Course Policy*.
- 4.28. Records of monitoring must be maintained in accordance with the *Records Management Policy and Procedure*.

Under enrolment

- 4.29. The Institute will deem international students who do not comply with the above requirements to be deliberately under-enrolling over an academic year, without an acceptable reason and contrary to the Institute's advice. Under-enrolling international students, as determined may be subject to:
- the student's behaviour and refusing any extension of their current Confirmation of Enrolment, or
 - cancellation of the student's enrolment for refusing to enrol in the required study load.
- 4.30. Where it is deemed necessary for reasons of course progression or Confirmation of Enrolment duration maintenance, the Institute reserves the right to enrol international students within a structured course study plan.
- 4.31. An extension to an international student's Confirmation of Enrolment can only be granted in compassionate and compelling circumstances as set out in the *Academic Progress Policy and Procedure*.

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE

To ensure that this policy is fit for purpose and meet the requirements of the TEQSA Compliance Frameworks, the policy will be;

- 5.1 internally endorsed by the Executive Management Team on development or review, prior to approval by the Academic Board or other delegated authority;
- 5.2 externally reviewed as part of any independent review of the TEQSA Compliance Frameworks approved by the Governing Board;
- 5.3 internally reviewed by the Responsible Officer every five years from the date of approval (if not earlier);
- 5.4 referenced to the applicable TEQSA Compliance Framework requirement(s) and/or other legislation/regulation.

6. FEEDBACK

Feedback or comments on this policy is welcomed by the listed Responsible officers of the Institute.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This policy was developed with reference to the following:

- Central Queensland University, Full-Time Student – Duration Of Study Policy and Procedure, 2024 ([Full-Time Study - Duration of Study Policy and Procedure](#))
- Australian National University, Policy: Student academic study load and progression, 2025 ([ANU Policy Library - Policy - Student academic study load and progression](#))
- University of Melbourne Overloading webpage ([Overloading | Current students | The University of Melbourne](#))
- Deakin University , Request to overload in a study period webpage ([Request to overload in a study period | Students](#))

8. VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date approved	Description	Approved by
1.0	April 2026	Initial issue	AB
Related legislation/ regulation/standard	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Act 2011 Education Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS) 2000 Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019 Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021		

Notes:

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AB = Academic Board

EMT = Executive Management Team