

Withdrawal and Discontinuance (Coursework) Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) To outline the University policy on:

- a. withdrawing from a coursework or honours unit;
- b. withdrawing from a coursework unit without academic penalty and / or financial liability;
- c. discontinuing a course; and
- d. the relationship between withdrawing from units and discontinuing a course.

Background

(2) Macquarie University aims to provide flexibility for students undertaking tertiary study by removing undue academic penalty and / or financial liability for students who experience Serious and Unavoidable Disruption which makes it impractical for them to successfully complete unit or course requirements.

(3) For a variety of reasons some coursework students may choose to withdraw from one or more units in which they are enrolled. It is a student's responsibility to correctly manage their unit enrolment, adding or removing units from their program of study via [eStudent](#).

(4) The University provides a range of academic and support services to assist students with their studies. While advice may be given, it is ultimately a student's responsibility to access these services as they believe appropriate and necessary.

(5) The University has a clear and unambiguous statement on withdrawal that emphasises consistency, equity, timeliness and transparency in relation to requests for withdrawal.

Scope

(6) This Policy applies to all coursework and honours students of Macquarie University, including students undertaking non-award study or admitted to the Bachelor of Philosophy or Master of Research, and to staff involved in the academic administration of coursework and honours study.

Section 2 - Policy

(7) The University will publish a [Census Date](#) and a Last Date to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty for every coursework unit (refer [Calendar of Dates](#) and [Census and Payment Due Dates](#)).

(8) For a request to Withdraw Without Penalty to be considered, the application must be submitted before the date for the final examination for that unit. If there is no final examination, an application must be submitted before the date of the final assessment item.

(9) Once a grade has been ratified by the Academic Senate, it will not be changed. In exceptional circumstances, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) may approve an application submitted at a later date.

Withdrawal

(10) The University permits a student to withdraw from a unit or units of study in which they are enrolled. The date of withdrawal from a unit will be:

- a. the date that the student withdraws from the unit online via [eStudent](#); or
- b. in exceptional and approved situations, the date that the Registrar receives written notification of a student's request to withdraw.

(11) When a student withdraws from a unit by the [Census Date](#), they will be considered to be 'not effectively enrolled' and neither academically penalised nor financially liable for the unit.

Withdrawal After Census Date

(12) When a student remains enrolled in a unit after the [Census Date](#), they are deemed to be 'effectively enrolled' and financially liable.

(13) Students who are 'effectively enrolled' and who withdraw from a unit after the [Census Date](#) but before the Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty, will record no academic penalty and the student's record will be endorsed with the status 'W' (Withdrawn).

(14) Students who are 'effectively enrolled' and who withdraw from a unit after the [Census Date](#), will be financially liable for either:

- a. the relevant student contribution fee from their Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP) and their consumed Student Learning Entitlement (SLE); or
- b. the relevant up-front tuition fee paid to the University; or
- c. the relevant debt incurred as a Commonwealth FEE-HELP loan,

unless the student successfully requests to withdraw without financial penalty due to Serious and Unavoidable Disruption to their study.

Withdrawal After Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty

(15) Students who are 'effectively enrolled' and who withdraw from a unit after the [Census Date](#) and after the Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty, will be deemed to have failed the unit. The student's record will be endorsed with the grade 'F' (Fail) unless the student successfully requests to withdraw without academic penalty due to Serious and Unavoidable Disruption to their study.

Withdrawal Without Academic and / or Financial Penalty

(16) A student may request to withdraw without academic penalty and / or financial liability due to Serious and Unavoidable Disruption to their study.

(17) Where a request to withdraw due to Serious and Unavoidable Disruption is approved by the University:

- a. the student's record will be endorsed with the status 'W' denoting 'Withdrawn'; and
- b. the application for remission or reversal of the relevant debt will be assessed.

Discontinuance

(18) Students may discontinue their course and elect to return to the same course provided they meet conditions in the [Admissions \(Coursework\) Policy](#).

Compliance and Breaches

(19) The University may commence applicable disciplinary procedures if a person to whom this Policy applies breaches this Policy (or any of its related procedures).

Section 3 - Procedures

(20) Refer to the [Withdrawal Without Penalty \(Coursework\) Procedure](#).

Section 4 - Guidelines

(21) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(22) Commonly defined terms are located in the University [Glossary](#). The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

- a. Census Date means the date by which a student must withdraw from a unit if they do not wish to be liable for Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) charges or tuition fees. If a student remains enrolled after the [Census Date](#), they will be liable for all associated unit fees.
- b. Discontinuance - a student is considered to have discontinued their course if they:
 - i. withdraw from all of the units for which they are enrolled in that calendar year and for which a grade has not been determined; or
 - ii. are not enrolled in any units for one of: two consecutive semesters, three consecutive trimesters, or four consecutive terms; or
 - iii. for Global Master of Business Administration (GMBA) students, where a student is not enrolled in any units for six consecutive terms.
- c. Enrol means the action taken by a student to add a unit to their program of study via [eStudent](#), and for which they are liable for fees and a subsequent recording of an academic status.
- d. Withdraw means
 - i. the action taken by a student to remove a unit from their program of study via [eStudent](#); and
 - ii. a status for a unit of study that indicates a student has withdrawn from the unit without academic penalty. Units with withdraw ('W') status still incur a financial liability.
- e. Last Date to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty means the date by which a student must withdraw from a unit or units or they will be deemed to have failed the unit unless they meet the learning outcomes. If a student remains enrolled after this date, and either subsequently withdraws or fails to meet the unit learning outcomes, their record will be endorsed with a grade of 'F'(Fail) unless they are able to demonstrate an event or circumstances that evidence unavoidable disruption.
- f. Serious and Unavoidable Disruption means an event or circumstance that:
 - i. could not have reasonably been anticipated, avoided or guarded against by the student; and
 - ii. was beyond the student's control; and
 - iii. caused substantial disruption to the student's capacity for effective study and / or the completion of required work; and
 - iv. occurred during an event critical study period and was at least three (3) consecutive days duration; and / or

v. prevented completion of a final examination.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	22nd February 2021
Review Date	8th March 2021
Approval Authority	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Approval Date	4th October 2011
Expiry Date	25th July 2021
Responsible Executive	Rorden Wilkinson Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Responsible Officer	Leanne Piggott Dean of Students
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