

STUDENT PROGRESSION, CANDIDATURE, LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND EXCLUSION POLICY

Policy owner	Education Committee
Policy category	Academic
Policy status	Approved
Approval body	Academic Board
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PURPOSE

MIECAT is committed to ensuring effective monitoring and management of students' academic progress in their course of study and for implementing appropriate intervention strategies for students at risk of unsatisfactory progress. MIECAT recognises that students may be susceptible to various difficulties during enrolment, including but not limited to illness, financial stress, and insufficient language or study skills. Continuous monitoring and feedback are vital to ensure that students are provided with adequate and structured support. This policy outlines the rules for meeting course completion requirements, leave of absence (*previously deferral*) and exclusion related to unsatisfactory progress.

SCOPE

All students who have enrolled and commenced their studies at MIECAT.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. Candidature

1.1 All MIECAT courses are deemed to be part time study load.

1.2 The maximum time for completion of all courses is as follows:

Course	Expected Course Duration (from time of original enrolment)	Maximum Course Duration (must complete within this time)
Masters in Therapeutic Arts Practice	3 years	4 years
Professional Doctorate in Therapeutic Arts Practice	5 years	8 years

- 1.3 All courses have academic year start and end dates. These dates are published annually along with the census dates. Students are deemed to be current and actively enrolled until the next census date for the MIECAT program which they are completing.
- 1.4 Candidature is not normally extended beyond the maximum course duration timeframes unless there are extenuating circumstances. These circumstances could include significant illness, disruptive life events or bereavement.
- 1.5 A formal request for a second leave of absence or extension to the maximum duration of the course must be requested by completing and submitting the MIECAT Change of Enrolment application form available upon request from the Student Services Team. (For more detailed information please see 6.2 of this document and Selection, Admissions and Enrolment policy)
- 1.6 In the Masters in Therapeutic Arts Practice, each semester must be satisfactorily completed before enrolment and entry into the next semester of the course.
- 1.7 In the Professional Doctorate in Therapeutic Arts Practice each year must be satisfactorily completed before enrolment and entry into the next year of the course.
- 1.8 Where a student in the Masters of Therapeutic Arts Practice is very close to completing course requirements but has been absent due to extenuating circumstances, additional work can be set to make up the required hours. This is at the discretion of the Subject Coordinator.

2. Unsatisfactory Academic Progress

Student/candidates are required to pass both Practical In-class and Multi-Modal Assessments to continue to the next subject/semester (depending on pre/co-requisites).

2.1 Resubmissions

In the event where an assessment task or criteria are marked as having insufficient evidence, students will be required to resubmit, and will be given one opportunity for this. Where there is satisfactory evidence provided, resubmitted components (tasks or criteria), will be marked as having achieved an ungraded *pass* (in Units 1 or 2, and all AQF 9 subjects); or marked as beginning evidence or a pass (in Masters hurdle units). When what is resubmitted does not provide satisfactory evidence, tasks/relevant criteria will be marked as Fail (See MIECAT Assessment and Moderation Policy).

2.2 If the student fails the resubmission, their progress will be discussed at a meeting of the Education Committee, where a recommendation will be made as to whether the student will be given the opportunity to repeat the subject the following year.

2.3 Students who are given the opportunity to repeat will be placed on leave of absence until the unit is next available. They will be charged the fees current in the year they repeat.

2.4 Students with remaining subjects to complete will be unable to progress into the next Semester. The progress of the student will be discussed at a meeting of the Education Committee, where a recommendation will be made as to whether the student will be given the opportunity to repeat the subject the following year.

2.5 Students who repeat a subject will be required to meet with the Academic Access Coordinator (Masters course) or Professional Doctorate Coordinator (Doctorate course) to co-develop an Academic Progress Support Strategy that provides for ongoing support for the student. When grades are monitored at the end of this subsequent semester's enrolment, the student is to be identified as either:

- maintaining satisfactory course progress whereby intervention strategy requirements are removed, and the student is allowed to enrol as per normal, or

- deemed to be not maintaining satisfactory progress whereby the student's exclusion from the course will be confirmed in writing.

Academic Board will review the recommendation and make a decision.

3. Progressions Panel Protocols for AQF8 Hurdle Subjects

Students who receive a Pass grade for any of their Practical In-class or Multimodal assignments, or who have been required to resubmit work more than twice in any of the hurdle subjects (Unit 3: Engaging with Materials; Unit 4: Emergent inquiry; Unit 5: Patterns of Emotional Experiencing; Unit 6: Refining Companioning Skills), will be required to meet with a Progressions Panel to discuss progression into the AQF9 subjects.

Where possible the Panel will consist of one teacher of a subject in which the student received a Pass grade, a Subject Coordinator, and another academic staff member.

The progressions process is as follows:

- Once the four hurdle assessments have been completed, all students achieving a Pass grade, in either the written multi-modal or in class assessment or being required to resubmit more than twice in any of these subjects will be contacted and invited to meet with a Progressions Panel to discuss progression.
- The purpose of the Progressions Panel will be to convene to consider the students' overall past academic performance. Students wishing to progress are invited to meet with the panel to discuss their progress and may present additional information for consideration if they choose.
- The Progressions Panel will weigh up all factors to reach a decision about progression of the student. Students will receive a written response from the Progressions Panel outlining the details of their decision and options available to the student.
- There are four possible outcomes for students who meet with the progressions panel. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis:
 1. The student may progress into AQF9 subjects after meeting with the Progressions Panel.
 2. The student may progress into AQF9 subjects following requirements set by the Progressions Panel.

3. The student may need to pause their study, with a conditional leave of absence in order to meet additional requirements, set by the Progressions Panel. These may include repeating one or more subjects to meet the hurdle by gaining a Credit grade or higher.
4. Progression ceases and the student exits the program at this point with a Graduate Diploma.

This progression process applies before students can progress into the AQF9 subjects.

4. Unpaid Fees

Students who have outstanding debts to MIECAT will have their candidature paused and are required to reconcile any outstanding debts within 12 months after which their enrolment will be cancelled. Outstanding debts will be followed up on according to the Debt Recovery Policy.

5. Lapsed Candidature

- 5.1 This applies to any person who has partially completed a MIECAT course, has been absent for more than 12 months without completing the Change of Enrolment Application Form or without approval by the MIECAT Education Committee
- 5.2 Should the student wish to resume their studies at MIECAT, they will be required to re-apply as per the Selections Policy and apply for RPL. If they are successful, they will be charged the fees advertised at the time of re-application and enrolment.
- 5.3 If a student's candidature has lapsed due to unsatisfactory progress and they wish to appeal this, they should proceed in accordance with the MIECAT Grievance handling and resolution policy.
- 5.4 Any student who does not satisfactorily complete the course requirements during the maximum course duration period, is no longer considered to be enrolled as a MIECAT student, unless they have successfully applied for a further leave of absence or extension beyond the maximum course duration.
- 5.5 For students whose candidature has lapsed, they will be withdrawn from the course and have their enrolment cancelled. Further engagement with any

MIECAT course will require recommencement via the application processes as outlined in the Selection and Admissions policy.

6. Defer Commencement and Leave of Absence

6.1 New Students

Selected applicants who are made an offer into the Masters course may defer their commencement for a maximum of 12 months. If the selected applicant does not accept the offer, their place will be offered to another applicant, and they will be required to reapply if they wish to be offered a place in future.

6.2 Current students

6.2.1 Students who have commenced and partially completed a course of study and who wish to take a leave of absence, may do so for up to one year. Students wishing to take a leave of absence must complete and submit the MIECAT Change of Enrolment Application form which can be requested from MIECAT Student Services. Leave of absence requests will be confirmed in writing via the student's MIECAT email addresses and within 14 days of submission. Fee-Help students who take a leave of absence after a census date, will incur a Fee-Help debt. Fee paying students who take a leave of absence after a census date will not be entitled to a fee refund. Fees current at the time of re-commencement will be applicable.

6.2.2 Leave of absences can only occur for up to one 12-month period during the Masters in Therapeutic Arts Practice. Please refer to 1.5 for the processes of applying for a second leave of absence or extending maximum completion. Students wishing to take a leave of absence in the Professional Doctorate in Therapeutic Arts Practice can take up to 2 years throughout their candidature. A request for a leave of absence must be applied for before the Fee-Help cut-off date, otherwise a debt will be incurred.

6.2.3 Under extenuating circumstances, such as significant illness, disruptive life events or bereavement, an extension to the maximum course duration may be applied for. A formal request for a second leave of absence or extension to the maximum duration of the course must be requested by completing and submitting the MIECAT Change of

Enrolment Application form available upon request from the Student Services Team. The completed form and supporting documentation will be reviewed by the relevant Course Coordinator. This form should be submitted prior to the course completion date. Students will be notified in writing via their MIECAT email address of the outcome of their request within 14 days of submission. MIECAT does not offer a third leave of absence. Students unable to recommence study after their second leave of absence will need to withdraw from the course and reapply through the Selection and Admissions process.

6.2.4 It is important to note that applying for a first or second leave of absence or extension to the maximum course duration does not guarantee that this request will be granted.

6.3 First year students commencing study at the beginning of the academic year may request a transfer into subjects in the mid-year intake of the same year if they provide an explanation of why they are unable to continue in their initial enrolment. This request can be requested using the MIECAT Change of Enrolment Application form available from the Student Services team. This instance will not be regarded as a leave of absence from their studies.

6.4 Students wishing to withdraw

Students wishing to withdraw from any of the courses must do so by completing and submitting the MIECAT Change of Enrolment Application form available upon request from the Student Services Team. Until submission of the form is received by the Student Services Team, students will be deemed to be enrolled and will continue to incur tuition fees. Fee-Help students who withdraw after a census date, will incur a Fee-Help debt. All other fee-paying students who withdraw after a census date will not be entitled to a fee refund.

6.5 Returning students

Students whose enrolment has lapsed; who have exited with the Graduate Diploma in Therapeutic Arts; or who have withdrawn from their studies with MIECAT, will need to re-apply for their chosen course of study by contacting the Student Services Team via email who will advise them on the Selection and Admissions process.

6.6 Progression into other MIECAT Courses

Internal progression from one MIECAT course of study into another is not automatic. Students who have completed one course of study, and who wish to progress into another are required to meet all course entry requirements.

If a student is unable to progress and has been asked to repeat a unit they will be required to take a leave of absence, returning to repeat the unit when it is next available. Details surrounding the terms of this will be outlined in the outcome of their progression panel letter.

6.7 Students seeking to appeal any decisions regarding their course progression, candidature or leave of absence should follow the procedure outlined in the MIECAT Grievance Handling and Resolution policy.

7. Exclusion

A breach of the MIECAT Academic Misconduct policy or Non-academic Misconduct policy may result in the cancellation of a student's candidature. The following procedure applies when a decision is made to cancel a student's candidature.

7.1 Students will be notified of MIECAT's intention to cancel their candidature in writing. Upon receipt of this notification students may respond in writing to the Education Committee and 'show cause' why they should not be excluded from the course and have their candidature cancelled within 10 working days. A student may appeal on the following grounds:

- additional information that wasn't considered in the original decision compassionate or compelling circumstances; or
- intervention strategies have not been implemented appropriately by MIECAT.

7.2 Upon receipt of the appeal, the Education Committee will review the appeal and make a recommendation to Academic Board. The Education Committee will either recommend:

- a. confirmation of the student's exclusion (student's appeal unsuccessful) – the student will be informed in writing that their candidature has been terminated and the reasons why. Students who are excluded for reasons of unsatisfactory course progress are not eligible to enrol in any MIECAT course at an equivalent or higher level, for a period of two academic years, or

- b. permit their re-enrolment for a subsequent semester, or
- c. Academic Board will review the recommendation and decide the course of action. The student will be notified in writing of the decision by Academic Board within 10 days.

7.3 In the event that the Student Academic and Non-academic Misconduct policies are repeatedly compromised and there is a clear values conflict between the student and the Institute, MIECAT reserves the right to review and terminate a student's candidature.

8. Provision of results / course documentation

All students at MIECAT whether they complete their course or not, are entitled to be issued with an authorised statement of results for the units they have completed.

Below is a schedule of the authorised documentation MIECAT provides to students at specific points in their study:

- a. Current Students receive:
 - A Statement of Results at the end of each Year level and upon completion of studies.
 - Re-enrolment confirmation for Masters Course students happens at the end of Year 1, upon entering Streams and at the end of Year 2. each new year.
- b. Students who complete units can receive:
 - A Letter of completion including a statement of results for the units they have completed.
- c. Graduating Students receive:
 - An Academic transcript & Testamur
 - Professional Doctorate students also receive an authorised letter from The Director and Academic Board recognising their achievement.
- d. Withdrawing Students receive:
 - An authorised statement of results up to the date of withdrawal.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The Executive Management Committee is responsible for overseeing the overall implementation of MIECAT's student progression, candidature, leave of absence, and exclusion policy, and providing guidance in the management of grievances.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

All students and staff at MIECAT

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

MIECAT Grievance Handling and Resolution Policy

MIECAT Selection, Admissions and Enrolment Policy

MIECAT Student Assessment and Moderation Policy

MIECAT Student Academic Misconduct Policy

MIECAT Student Non-academic Misconduct Policy

MIECAT Change of Enrolment Application Form

VERSION HISTORY

Date of Issue	Version	Author	Summary of changes
23.07.21	1.0	Stacey Bush/Kim Fox	Finalised document for Academic Board feedback
06.08.21	1.0	S Bush	Refinements made in response to Academic Board feedback
11.04.23	2.0	J. Mitchell	Policy reviewed and refined
18.04.23	2.0	J. Mitchell	Approved by Academic Board
02.04.24	2.1	J. Mitchell	Edited item 2.6 and item 8 Provision of results including for students who do not complete the course
05.04.24	2.1	K. Szydlik	Edited items 1.8, 2.4, 3, 5.1, 6.2.3, 6.5 to reflect changes from EC

21.05.24	21.	J. Mitchell/ K. Szydluk	Approved by Academic Board
19.08.26	2.2	Alix Richards	Edited 'deferral' to 'leave of absence' approved by Education Committee. Updated 'Deferral Form' to 'Change of Enrolment' form.

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