

SPI Academic Progress Policy and Procedure



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ST PADARN'S INSTITUTE

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Related Documents:	<p>This policy has been developed in accordance with the following regulations, policies, and procedures. This list is not exhaustive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Padarn's Institute Programme Information • St Padarn's Institute Learning Support Policy • St Padarn's Institute Equality and Diversity Policy • St Padarn's Institute Data Protection Policy • Durham University Learning and Teaching Handbook 		
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2. Introduction

2.1 St Padarn's expects all learners engaged in full-time or part-time study to fulfil the academic commitments of the programme of study upon which they are enrolled.

2.2 St Padarn's expects all learners engaged in full-time or part-time study to make satisfactory academic progress in their programme of study.

2.3 St Padarn's will communicate to learners the specific academic expectations of the programme of study upon which they are enrolled.

2.4 Learners who do not fulfil the academic expectations of the programme of study upon which they are enrolled may be required to withdraw from that programme of study.

2.5 Prior to the decision being taken to require a learner's withdrawal from their programme of study St Padarn's will offer informal resolution and will, if required, begin a formal process in which the learner is required to participate.

3. Academic Commitments

3.1 Learners who study with St Padarn's are required to make satisfactory academic progress in their studies and fulfil their academic commitments. Making satisfactory progress usually involves completing summative assignments and attending organised activities (including, but not limited to attendance at residential courses, lectures, seminars, and tutorials) that are identified to them as being compulsory.

3.2 The precise requirements for making satisfactory academic progress in each programme and/or module will be made clear to learners. Information about academic commitments may be made available in a number of formats or locations depending on the programme and/or module (examples include but are not limited to during the application and induction processes, in Module Handbooks, within the St Padarn's Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle), or in email communication).

4. No fault or good cause progression concerns

4.1 St Padarn's recognises that a learner may fail to make satisfactory progress for a number of reasons, including many that are not the learner's fault, including illness, personal circumstances, and professional or family commitments.

4.2 Where a learner, because of illness or other good cause, finds themselves unable to meet their academic commitments then a concession may be offered for a period of no more than five weeks (to only be available as a single block of time of five weeks duration). A concession will not usually be offered on more than one occasion during an academic year.

The concession will be approved by the Chair of the Board of Examiners (or their nominee).

4.3 Summative assessments that are due during the five-week concession should be

completed by the original published submission dates unless otherwise approved.

4.4 Learners should approach, in the first instance, their Programme Leader to discuss a concession and to identify where additional support may be made available.

4.5 Learners may still avail themselves of the facility to interrupt their studies and seek other remedies to manage academic workloads and other commitments during the period of a concession.

5. Informal Resolution

5.1 Where a concern exists over a learner's academic progress St Padarn's will, in the first instance, seek to resolve the matter through informal means to support the learner to re-engage. The learner's Programme Leader and other staff such as the Personal Tutor will seek to support the learner by ensuring that academic and pastoral issues are continually addressed. Staff will seek to identify the reason(s) why a learner is failing to fulfil their academic commitments. This may mean signposting the learner toward medical or other help or by supporting the learner to engage with the Institute's procedures (e.g., Interruption of Study applications, Concession or Serious Adverse Circumstances (SAC) requests) such as may be appropriate for the learner and their programme of study.

5.2 The Programme Leader will in all cases ensure that a detailed record is preserved of the interactions with the learner during the informal resolution process (this should include, but not be limited to records of meetings, discussions, advice offered, and interventions proposed).

6. Formal Resolution

6.1 Where a learner has not responded positively to the informal resolution process then a formal procedure will begin which will require the learner to re-engage with their programme of study or which will seek to require their withdrawal.

6.2 In all cases learners who are identified through programme monitoring as being at risk of failing to make academic progress will be issued with a warning letter that states that should the learner not begin to make academic progress then further formal action will begin.

6.3 In all cases the warning letter will:

- Clearly identify the steps necessary for the learner to be considered to be making satisfactory academic progress.
- Clearly identify a timeframe within which that academic progress should be demonstrated.
- Invite the learner to a meeting with the Programme Leader (or a nominated member of staff) to discuss their situation and identify the steps necessary to return the learner to good standing.

6.4 Should the warning letter fail to return the learner to good standing then the following will apply.

6.5. An Academic Progress Note (APN) will be issued.

6.5.1 The Academic Progress Note will clearly state:

- the grounds for raising concerns about the learner's academic progress.
- the academic requirements which the learner must fulfil according to a stated timetable within a period of normally not less than four weeks. The purpose of this is to ensure that the learner has caught up any work missed and/or has regained the habit of regular study. The period of four weeks (or the timeframe stated in the APN) may extend over two terms; it may not extend across academic years.

6.5.2 The learner who receives the Academic Progress Note will be required:

- to seek advice about his/her academic work.
- to make an appointment, to normally take place in person, to talk with an appropriate member of staff – which may or may not be the member of staff issuing the APN letter - about the contents of the letter. This meeting should normally take place within one week. Virtual meetings can be used, by agreement of all parties. This is to ensure that any problems which the learner is experiencing can be discussed and that the learner understands the importance of maintaining an effective study routine. It is necessary to warn the learner that a failure to meet the requirements specified in the APN letter could result in the learner

being withdrawn from their academic programme.

- to make any relevant information concerning serious adverse circumstances known to the Institute as soon as possible and prior to the end of the APN period at the latest. This will allow St Padarn's to make an informed decision about the learner's progress. The learner may also make an appointment during the last week of the APN period to offer such information.
- to confirm receipt of the letter in writing (the learner may provide confirmation electronically).

6.5.3 At the expiry of the APN period the Programme Leader will make a recommendation on further action taking into account any serious adverse circumstances:

- that the learner's academic progress has improved sufficiently for there to be no need for continued monitoring of his/her performance.
- that the learner's academic progress has improved but those concerns remain.
- that the learner has not fulfilled the academic commitments required and therefore should be asked to withdraw from St Padarn's and/or their academic programme.

6.5.4 The Board of Examiners (by Chair's Action if appropriate), being in receipt of the Programme Leader's recommendation and any other documentation appropriate to the learner's case will decide:

- either that the learner has demonstrated that he/she has returned to making appropriate academic progress.
- or, that the learner has failed to demonstrate his/her return to making appropriate academic progress and should be required to withdraw from the programme. In exceptional circumstances only, the APN may be extended for a period of up to a further four weeks.

6.5.5 The learner will be informed in writing of the Board of Examiners' decision within seven days of the meeting of the Board (or of the issuing of the Chair's Action). The letter will, where a learner is withdrawn from study, also provide information on the appeals procedure.

7. Appeals Procedure: Right to Appeal

7.1 The learner may request that Durham University undertake a review of the decision of the Academic Progress process and the decision of the Board of Examiners. Information about how to appeal is provided in the St Padarn's Institute Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure.

The review will consider whether:

- the decision was not made in accordance with correct procedures as detailed in this policy.
- that there exists or existed, adverse circumstances affecting the learner's academic performance and those making the decision were not aware of these adverse circumstances at the time the decision was made. There must be a good reason why these circumstances were not made known at the time that the decision was made.

8. Appeal to External Bodies: The Office of the Independent Adjudicator

It is only possible to make an appeal about an academic complaint to an external body after all the internal appeal and review procedures have been exhausted. It will usually only be possible to appeal against the final decision if the Institute has either not followed its own procedures properly or it has not dealt with a complaint fairly.

8.1 Appealing to The Office of The Independent Adjudicator:

Once a learner has completed all the internal Institute procedures in relation to an Academic Appeal, if still they remain dissatisfied with how the appeal was handled, they may be able to complain to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) by contacting them at: www.oiahe.org.uk. The OIA was set up under the Higher Education Act 2004 to provide 'an independent learner complaints scheme'. All Higher Education Institutions in England and Wales are required to comply with the scheme, which is free to learners. However, the OIA can only consider unresolved complaints from learners about academic matters **after** the Institute's own complaints and appeals procedure have concluded.

The complaints which the OIA will consider include, but are not limited to:

- Academic Appeals
- Extenuating Circumstances

- Teaching and Facilities
- Accommodation
- Research supervision
- Welfare
- Discrimination (but see * below)
- Bullying and harassment
- Placements
- Procedural irregularities
- Unfair practices
- Disciplinary matters - including plagiarism.

* In considering issues related to discrimination the OIA does not act as a court. It does not investigate or make legal findings in the same manner as a court. However, it is appropriate for the OIA to refer to the law and guidance on discrimination to form an opinion as to good practice and to decide whether the provider has acted fairly.

The OIA cannot consider complaints/appeals concerning:

- Admissions
- Academic judgement
- Matters which are already are or have been the subject of Court or Tribunal proceedings unless the proceedings have been 'stayed' or adjourned.

8.2 In order to appeal to the OIA, the learner will need to:

8.2.1 Request a 'Completion of Procedures Letter' from the Institute to submit with their appeal to the OIA. This must be requested within one month of the complaint or appeal being upheld. If their complaint or appeal is not upheld the completion of procedures letter will be issued automatically within **28 days** of the completion of the internal processes.

8.2.2 Complete the OIA's own complaint form, which is available from www.oiahe.org.uk.

8.2.3 Submit their appeal to the OIA within **twelve months** of the date of their

Completion of Procedures letter.

9. Equal Opportunities

The Institute makes every effort, in accordance with its [Equality and Diversity Policy](#) to ensure that learners are not unlawfully discriminated against under the provisions of the Equality Act 2010. We believe that diversity is a positive contribution to the learning experience at St Padarn's.

10. Data Protection

10.1 Records of any investigation into academic progress misconduct are kept in accordance with our Data Protection Policy which can be found on the Church in Wales Website at <https://www.churchinwales.org.uk/en/privacy-notice/>.

11. Responsibilities, Policy Approval and Review

11.1 This document, as well as all other policy, procedure and guidance documents relating to learners studying at St Padarn's, will be available to all, monitored regularly and reviewed and evaluated periodically.

11.2 The Director of Operations has overall responsibility for this policy, including its approval and review.

12. Policy Communication

12.1 This document can be found on the St Padarn's website.

12.2 Every effort will be made to respond to any request to provide this policy in a different format.

12.3 This policy will be included in staff and learner induction.