

Title	Course Duration
Overview	Describes the principles and practice for the management of students who exceed the maximum amount of time that a student should take to complete their degree studies
Key Words	progress, 10-year rule,
Scope	All coursework degrees in the Melbourne Model
Related documents	
Approved by	Academic Board
Date approved	28 February 2008
Start Date	March 2008 for New Generation degrees January 2009 for other Melbourne Model courses
Date for review	September 2009
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February 2008

Course Duration

Definitions: (NB. These are working definitions that may be changed to ensure consistency with terminology employed in the Student System)

Normal Course Duration: Years of study expected for completion of a particular course. Figure may vary depending on whether it describes a full-time or part-time program. Figure does not include Leave of Absence.

Actual Course Duration: Years in which a student is enrolled before they complete the requirements of a particular course. Figure may include Leave of Absence or other breaks in enrolment.

Maximum Course Duration: Maximum number of years allowed for completion of a course including full/part-time enrolment, Leave of Absence, other gaps in enrolment and credit.

Full-time course: A course in which students are not normally permitted to enroll part-time.

Full/Part-time course: A course in which students are normally permitted to enroll part-time if they choose to do so.

Policy: All coursework programs in the Melbourne Model

All courses have a normal duration expressed in terms of the number of years of full-time study required for completion. Some courses may also have a normal duration expressed in terms of years of part-time study required for completion. Students will normally be expected to comply with these estimates of course duration.

Actual course duration will vary depending on credit awarded for previous study (see policy on Advanced Standing for further details), enrolment in non-standard teaching periods (i.e. Summer and Winter programs), approved variations to course structure and the number of subjects successfully completed by a student each year.

The maximum course duration normally permitted will vary depending on the normal duration of the relevant course (See below for details). Maximum course duration includes any periods of leave of absence or approved study at other institutions for credit towards a Melbourne course (i.e. complementary course studies or international exchange/study abroad).

In exceptional cases, it may be possible to extend the maximum course duration by up to one year.

Students who fail to complete within the maximum course duration (including any approved extension of time) will be regarded as having made unsatisfactory progress in their course and their enrolment managed under the terms of the Unsatisfactory Progress Policy.

The University will identify and monitor students at risk of failing to complete their courses within the maximum course duration, providing them with advice and assistance to ensure completion if possible.

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Procedure and Practice All coursework programs in the Melbourne Model

1. Identification and monitoring

- The maximum course duration is calculated based on a formula that varies depending on whether or not students enrolled in that course are normally permitted to study part-time as follows:
 - 1.1 Full-time courses: In these courses, students are not normally permitted to study part-time. The maximum course duration is based on a calculation of $N + 2$, where N = normal full-time duration of the course. Enrolment for students who have not completed the course at the end of the normal full-time duration of the course will be formally reviewed and managed according to the process set out below.
 - 1.2 Full/Part-time courses: In these courses, students are normally permitted to study part-time, should they choose to do so. The maximum course duration is based on a calculation of $2N + 2$, where N equals normal full-time duration of the course. Enrolment for students who have not completed the course at the end of a period equal to twice the normal full-time duration of that course ($2N$) will be formally reviewed and managed according to the process set out below.
 - 1.3 Concurrent Diplomas: For the purpose of calculating maximum course duration, a concurrent diploma will add one year to the normal full-time course duration of the Bachelors degree being undertaken concurrently. This applies irrespective of whether the student is eligible to overload their enrolment and complete the courses sooner than normal.
- Through the Student System the following measures will be employed to identify and monitor students at risk of failing to complete their courses within the maximum course duration:
 - From first year, students will use study packages to plan their course to completion. This facility will not allow students to formulate a study package that will take longer than the maximum course duration to complete.
 - At the end of each teaching period the University will identify students who have been enrolled without completion in one course for long enough to warrant a formal review of their progress against maximum course duration. These students will be assigned a 'duration' flag on the system.
 - These students will be sent notification of their status including tailored advice about what they require to complete their course within the maximum course duration and an invitation to discuss their situation with a Student Adviser if required.
 - Also at the end of each teaching period, students who have previously been assigned the 'duration' flag, and who have not yet completed their course will be identified and required to meet with a Student Adviser to ensure that they are able to plan their course for completion within the maximum course duration.

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2. Variations to the maximum course duration

- Students concerned about their capacity to complete their course within the maximum course duration should be referred to a Student Adviser to discuss their situation.
- After discussion with a Student Adviser, some students may conclude that they will be unable to complete their course within the maximum course duration. These students have the following options:
 - Discontinue their enrolment in the relevant course; or
 - Apply for a variation to the maximum course duration.
- An application to vary the maximum course duration must be made in writing to the dean or custodial dean of the relevant degree. It should include a detailed course plan demonstrating when completion would be possible, and an explanation of the reasons for the application, including supporting documentation if appropriate.
- A formal response to the request will be issued and noted on the student's file.
- Approval will take account of the student's circumstances and the nature of the program.
- If the request is not approved, the student will be counselled about discontinuation, any other options and their appeal rights.

3. Exceeding the maximum course duration without permission

- Students who reach the maximum course duration (including any approved extension of time) without completing the requirements of their course will be required to meet with the Course Unsatisfactory Progress Committee (CUPC). The CUPC must make a recommendation to the Academic Board as follows:
 - If the CUPC is satisfied that there is a reasonable likelihood that the student will complete their course within the next year it may recommend that the student be permitted to re-enrol for that period.
 - If the CUPC is not satisfied that the student is likely to complete their course within the next year, it must recommend to the Academic Board that the student's enrolment in the course be terminated.
- These students will have the following options:
 - Accept the recommendation either explicitly or by taking no action; or
 - Discontinue their enrolment; or
 - Attend a hearing of the Academic Board in relation to the recommendation of the CUPC.
- The Academic Board may endorse or override the recommendation of the CUPC. Before permitting a student to re-enrol for any further period, the Board must determine that the student may appropriately complete the relevant course, without the extension compromising the academic integrity of the course.
- More details about the policy and procedure for the monitoring and administration of unsatisfactory progress can be found in the Unsatisfactory Progress policy.
- Leave of absence will not normally be permitted for students who have exceeded their maximum course duration, irrespective of whether they have taken Leave in the past.

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4. Discretion

- Student Advisers are responsible for the provision of advice to students about course planning to ensure they are able to complete within the maximum course duration. Complex matters may be referred to the manager of the relevant Student Centre or the dean or custodial dean of the relevant degree.
- The dean or custodial dean of the relevant degree may agree to an extension of the maximum course duration for up to one year in exceptional circumstances.
- The CUPC may agree to a further extension of the maximum course duration for up to one year if they are satisfied that the student is likely to be able to complete the course within that time. Alternatively, they may recommend to the Academic Board that the student's enrolment be terminated.

5. Appeals

Students concerned about decisions made in respect to this policy should consult the Student Grievance Policy for information about how to lodge a grievance.