1. Purpose
To outline the rules and procedure for students who wish to withdraw from a Higher Education accredited course (unit of study) and the outcomes that may arise, including academic standing and financial liability.

To define responsibilities, requirements and timelines relating to these applications.

2. Scope
This Procedure applies to all coursework students enrolled at the University of New South Wales.

3. Definitions
Definitions are consistent with the UNSW Glossary of Terms: http://www.handbook.unsw.edu.au/general/2014/SSAPO/glossary.html

**Academic Standing:** An indication of a student’s current progress toward completion of a program. At the end of each semester an Academic Standing is assigned. This is calculated according to the proportion of load passed (undergraduate students), or cumulative number of failures (postgraduate students). Academic Standing is also calculated at the career level (i.e. undergraduate/postgraduate), not at the program level.

**Academic Transcript:** An official record of a student’s full enrolment history, results, awards and official prizes obtained at UNSW.

**Course:** Otherwise known as a subject, a course is an individual study unit offered within a program with a specific unit of credit weighting (for example, MATH1131 - Mathematics 1A, 6 units of credit.)
**Course Authority:** The School responsible for the planning, resourcing and delivery of a course, including teaching resources and arrangements, and administrative arrangements including publication of course information, teaching delivery, including LMS supported delivery, assessment and quality.

**Grades:** Students receive a final assessment grade for each course in their program. Examples include: High Distinction (HD), Pass (PS), Fail (FL) and result not finalised (WD).

**Program Authority:** The Program Authority is responsible for the planning, resourcing and delivery of a program, including teaching resources and arrangements, and administrative arrangements. The Program Authority is responsible for all matters that affect students in an award program – including admission, enrolment, progression, and graduation.

For dual award programs one of the contributing Faculties is identified as the Program Authority (when the program is proposed). In practice the Program Authority may delegate some responsibilities to Schools in the Faculty.

**SEADU:** Student Equity and Disabilities Unit.

**Semester:** The administrative time period in which Teaching Periods are defined, students enrol and for which students are charged fees or student contributions. UNSW has two main semesters per year, as well as the eight-week Summer Term in December/January.

The two main semesters are structured around 12 weeks of classes in 13 weeks. Each semester also includes a one week mid-semester break. Semester 1 is, approximately, from March to June and Semester 2 is, approximately, from August to November.

Exceptions to this pattern are the Faculty of Medicine and the Australian Graduate School of Management whose academic years are divided into multiple teaching periods within the semester structure.

**Teaching Period:** Each Semester is composed of several Teaching Periods, for example Teaching Period 1A (T1A) and Teaching Period 1B (T1B) in Semester 1. A course in Semester 1 or 2 may run over 13 weeks, or in one of 2 shorter 6 week periods. The eight-week Summer Term has several teaching periods.

**The University:** Refers to the University of New South Wales.

**Weighted Average Mark (WAM):** is calculated by multiplying the mark obtained for each relevant result by the units of credit of the particular course, adding up the products and dividing by the total number of units of credit for the relevant courses. A 'Term WAM' is calculated for relevant results in a semester, and a separate cumulative WAM is calculated for relevant results over the student's entire program.

**Census Date:** The census date is the date on which all enrolment arrangements must be finalised. There are different census dates for each Teaching Period. Census dates are set by the University in accordance with Commonwealth legislation (HESA 2003); Census date deadlines cannot be extended for any Teaching Period.

All UNSW students are liable to pay for the courses they are enrolled in at the relevant teaching period census date. If a student is approved to withdraw from a course after the census date, the student will retain liability for fees due for that course, unless given approval to withdraw without financial liability.

**Course Withdrawal Dates:** Refer to the Calendar and Key Dates on University web pages. These include dates for Enrolment, Fee Payment, Census, Exams and Results.
4. Procedures

Refer to Table 1, attached to this document, for more information about the outcomes and grades used.

4.1 General Principles

4.1.1 Students may apply to withdraw from a course at any time during a teaching period. However, depending on the date of withdrawal and the teaching period of enrolment, different outcomes may arise including withdrawn course grades and a financial liability.

4.1.2 In line with the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA), in exceptional circumstances students may apply for late withdrawal (after the Census Date) from a course and a remission of course tuition fees.

4.2 Withdrawal from a Course

4.2.1 A student who withdraws from a course on, or prior to, the Census Date, will receive a full refund of any tuition fees paid towards that course, less any money owed to the University. A student who has deferred the fee for that course under HECS-HELP or FEE-HELP will have that deferral cancelled. The withdrawn course(s) will not appear on the student’s academic record or transcript. The course will not be included in the calculation of WAM or taken into account in the determination of the student’s academic standing.

4.2.2 A student who withdraws from a course after the Census Date, but on or prior to, a specified academic withdrawal date, will retain the full tuition fee liability for the course. A NF (No Fail) grade will be recorded against the course in the student system, but no grade will appear on the student’s academic record or transcript. The course will not be included in the calculation of WAM or taken into account in the determination of the student’s academic standing.

4.2.3 A student who withdraws from a course after the Census and academic withdrawal dates, but prior to the last day of teaching in the relevant teaching period (the late academic withdrawal date), will retain the full tuition fee liability for the course. A grade of AW (Academic Withdrawal) will be recorded in the student system against the course and will appear on the student’s academic record and transcript. The course will not be included in the calculation of WAM. The course will be taken into account in the determination of the student’s academic standing: this allows the University to review the student’s progress and identify students at risk, and to provide support including remedial action under the Academic Standing guidelines.

4.2.4 After the last day of teaching in the relevant teaching period, a student who has not applied to withdraw from a course will retain financial liability and will be graded according to the normal assessment criteria. The student will retain the full tuition fee liability for the course. The final mark and grade awarded by the Course Authority will appear on the student’s academic record and transcript. The course will be included in the calculation of WAM.
and will be taken into account in the determination of the student’s academic standing.

4.2.5 A student cannot apply to withdraw from a course online if it is the only or last course the student is enrolled in for the semester. In this case the student should apply to the Program Office.

4.2.6 A student who has completed a course (passing grade) is not eligible to apply to withdraw from the course.

4.3 Special Permission to withdraw from a course without financial liability after the Census Date (remission of course tuition fees)

4.3.1 If a student considers that the need to withdraw from a course is due to “Circumstances beyond the student’s control”, the student may apply in writing to the Manager, Student Administration.

4.3.2 Applications for special permission to withdraw from a course without financial liability are assessed in accordance with Government legislation and against all of the following criteria:

- Circumstances* beyond the student’s control and
- The circumstances did not make their full impact on the student until after the census date for the course that the student requests withdrawal from and
- The circumstances make it impracticable for the student to complete the requirements for the course.

*The circumstances must be unusual, uncommon or abnormal.

4.3.3 Applications to withdraw from a course without financial liability must be submitted within 12 months from the last day of teaching in the teaching period in which the student was enrolled in the course.

4.3.4 Applications submitted more than 12 months after the teaching period will only be considered if the student can demonstrate that they were unable to submit their application during the prescribed 12 month period.

4.3.5 Students will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application within 14 days of submission.

4.3.6 Where a student applies successfully to withdraw from a course without financial liability, the student will receive a full refund of any tuition fees (this does not include the Student Amenities Fee) paid towards that course, less any money owed to the University. A grade of PW (Permitted Withdrawal) will be recorded in the student system against the course and will appear on the student’s academic record and transcript. The course will not be included in the calculation of WAM. The course will be taken into account in the determination of the student’s academic standing: this allows the University to review the student’s progress and identify students at risk, and
to provide support including remedial action under the Academic Standing guidelines.

4.3.7 Where a student's application to withdraw from a course without financial liability is unsuccessful the student will retain the full tuition fee liability for the course. The student may be granted academic withdrawal under the provisions of 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 above.

4.4 Academic Standing

4.4.1 AW and PW grades are taken into account in the determination of the student's academic standing: this allows the University to review the student's progress and identify students at risk, and to provide support including remedial action under the Academic Standing guidelines.

4.4.2 A student whose academic standing has reached Suspension or Exclusion will be permitted to apply to withdraw from a course without financial liability after the Census Date but will only be permitted to continue with their studies the following Semester if they successfully apply to the Re-Enrolment Appeals Committee to be formally readmitted to their program.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Students

5.1.1 Students are responsible for managing their own enrolment and for ensuring that they adhere to the University’s published deadlines for enrolling, paying fees, and withdrawing from courses.

5.1.2 A student seeking to withdraw from a course on or prior to the Census Date is able to withdraw from the course without permission from the Course or Program Authority. All other applications for withdrawal are assessed in accordance with this Procedure.

5.1.3 International students should be aware that withdrawing from a course or program may affect their student visa. International students should seek advice from Student Central before lodging any application to withdraw from a course or program. Withdrawing from a course(s) may result in not completing studies within the duration specified in the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE). As student visa holders, international students are required to maintain an enrolment program and complete their degree within their CoE dates. Withdrawal from a course may result in cancelling the CoE and may ultimately lead to the student visa being cancelled.

5.2 Course Authority and Program Authority Responsibilities

5.2.1 Course and program authorities are responsible for publishing advice to students on how AW and PW grades are treated for merit-based determinations such as Distinction, Honours, the University Medal, and the Dean’s list.

5.2.2 Course authorities should consider the availability of late academic withdrawal when setting assessment tasks and deadlines, especially for
group work and courses where there is no final assessment (that is, after the end of teaching).

5.2.3 Course and program authorities are required to review applications for special permission to withdraw without financial liability under Clause 4.3, and provide detailed commentary on their support, or otherwise, for the application.

5.3 **Student and Academic Services Responsibilities**

5.3.1 The Director, SAS, is responsible for publishing information about the Procedure, and the range of possible impacts on Academic Standing and faculty merit-based determinations, such as Honours.

5.3.2 The decision maker (Manager, Student Administration) assesses applications and supporting documentation against the criteria for late withdrawal without financial liability set out under Clause 4.3. In line with the *Administrative Information for Providers*, the decision maker will need to consider what information and evidence the student has provided in their application and other relevant information available in the student’s record. The application will be assessed on merit based on the information provided.

5.3.3 The student will be advised of the outcome (see Table 1 for Outcomes) of the application in writing within 14 days of submission.

6. **Appeals**

6.1 Where an unsuccessful application has been made without the student submitting all relevant supporting documentation, the student may apply for a review of that decision. This should be made in writing to the Manager, Student Administration, and must include additional information and supporting documentation. The request for a review must be submitted within 28 days of the student being notified of the outcome of the initial application. The student will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review within 14 days of submission of additional documents.

6.2 An appeal of the original decision may be made within 28 days from the day the student received notification of the outcome of the application or the outcome of the review (whichever is the later). The request should be directed to the Director, Student and Academic Services and must state the reasons why a reconsideration of the decision is being requested.

6.3 If the appeal of the decision is unsuccessful, and the student believes that there has been procedural irregularity with the handling of their application, a complaint can be made in accordance with the Student Complaint Procedures to the Student Conduct and Appeals officer in the Office of the Director, Student Life and Learning.

7. **Legal and Policy Framework**

This Procedure complies with the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (Cwlth), the *Administration Information for Higher Education Providers* (AIP) and the National Code pertaining to the *Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (Cwlth).
8. Implementation

8.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The Director, Student and Academic Services, is responsible for the implementation and review of the Application for Late Withdrawal from a Course Procedure. The Director is also responsible for systems that support the Procedure, publications, reports and communications.

The Assistant Director, Student and Academic Services, Manager, Student Administration is responsible for ensuring that procedures are administered appropriately.

8.2 Support and Advice

Advice on this procedure can be sought from the Contact Officer.

8.3 Forms

Fee Remission Application: https://student.unsw.edu.au/fees-refund

9. Review & History

These procedures operate within the context of State and Federal legislation and University policy.

The Procedure will be reviewed initially after 12 months with further reviews to be determined subsequently.

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<th>Version</th>
<th>Authorised by</th>
<th>Approval Date</th>
<th>Effective Date</th>
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<td>1.0</td>
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<td>27 October 2014</td>
<td>1 December 2014</td>
<td>This is a new procedure.</td>
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10. Acknowledgements

Course withdrawal policies and procedures from a range of Australian universities were reviewed and related policy documents from the following universities are gratefully acknowledged:

- Australian Catholic University
- Curtin University of Technology
- Macquarie University
- Monash University
- Queensland University of Technology
- Swinburne University of Technology
- The University of Western Sydney
- The University of Queensland
- Bond University
- The University of Canberra
- The University of South Australia
- The University of Sydney
- The University of Technology Sydney
- Edith Cowan University
- The University of Adelaide
Table 1: Deadlines and outcomes for academic / financial withdrawal applications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>WAM</th>
<th>Academic Standing</th>
<th>Academic Transcript</th>
<th>Fees</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Census Date</td>
<td>No academic record impact. Student may withdraw without Financial Liability without permission</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Not included</td>
<td>Not included</td>
<td>No grade shown (Course not included on Transcript)</td>
<td>Refunded in full, less any money owed to the University</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 After Census Date but before Academic Withdrawal date</td>
<td>Academic Withdrawal without permission – no academic impact. recruits)</td>
<td>NF grade (no fail)</td>
<td>Not included</td>
<td>Not included</td>
<td>No grade shown (Course not included on Transcript)</td>
<td>Student is liable for fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 After Academic Withdrawal date, but prior to Late Academic Withdrawal date (last day of teaching in the relevant Teaching Period)</td>
<td>Academic record impact. Grade is shown on transcript. Student may withdraw without permission</td>
<td>AW grade (academic withdrawal)</td>
<td>Not included</td>
<td>Included</td>
<td>AW grade shown (Course included on Transcript)</td>
<td>Student is liable for fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 After the last day of teaching of the relevant Teaching Period</td>
<td>Academic record impact. Student may not apply for Academic Withdrawal (AW grade)</td>
<td>Finalised grade confirmed by Course Authority</td>
<td>Included</td>
<td>Included</td>
<td>Final Grade and mark shown (Course included on Transcript)</td>
<td>Student is liable for fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 After Census Date and up to one year after the semester in which the student was enrolled</td>
<td>Academic record impact. Student may apply to withdraw without Financial Liability (and, by extension, Academic Withdrawal). Must satisfy HESA criteria.</td>
<td>PW (permitted withdrawal)</td>
<td>Not Included</td>
<td>Included</td>
<td>PW grade shown (Course included on Transcript)</td>
<td>Student is not liable for fees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>