University General Regulations relating to Progress of Students allow for a formal University response to concerns raised by departments about a student’s progress. See www.shef.ac.uk/calendar

Grounds for review of a student’s progress in the Regulations are given as:

a) failure to attend regularly, or as specified in the relevant Regulations, the programme of study for which the student has registered;
b) failure to perform adequately the work of the programme;
c) failure to present at the times appointed such written work as may have been required;
d) failure to pass an examination;
e) failure to pursue the programme of research or to co-operate appropriately with the appointed supervisor;
f) failure to demonstrate a satisfactory level of professional competence in dealings with others which form part of the student’s programme of study or research.

Departmental Review of a Student’s Progress

Each department has their own arrangements for considering progress concerns in relation to the grounds set out in the Progress Regulations above and these should be followed before referring the matter to the Faculty.

In relation to the Regulation “failure to pass an examination”, it should be noted that it is not envisaged that a Progress Concerns Report would be submitted after initial failure in an examination, though a report might well be appropriate in particular cases of repeated or sustained failure.

In addition, it would normally be inappropriate to invoke the Progress Regulations in cases where a student’s progress issues arise from known medical or personal difficulties. In addition, and as a first action, it is also good practice to signpost students to the following University support services, where appropriate to do so:

- **General information**: www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/sos
- **Study Skills**: www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/301
- **Mental Health Support Services (SAMHS) (inc Counselling Service)**: http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/mental-wellbeing
- **University Health Service**: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/health-service
- **Disability and Dyslexia Support**: www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/disability
- **Central Welfare and Guidance**: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/cwag
- **Student Advice Centre**: su.sheffield.ac.uk/student-advice-centre

For students on programmes for which the separate Regulations on Fitness to Practise apply, it may be appropriate to consider invoking these (see www.shef.ac.uk/sss/sas/progress - Faculties and programmes to which Fitness to Practise Regulations normally apply can be found via the link to “Fitness to Practise” under the heading “Procedures”).

In developing departmental procedures relating to student progress, you may wish to be aware of the following variety of methods used by University departments to monitor progress/attendance (obviously not all approaches would be feasible in all departments):
• Attendance lists kept for lectures at certain stages of the course (e.g. close monitoring during a particular week/s during the early part of the Autumn Semester);
• Random attendance monitoring, with follow-ups on non-attendees;
• Tutorial/class registers;
• Placing a particular emphasis on student pastoral support at the beginning of the academic year, in order to highlight any difficulties at an early stage;
• Staff responsibilities being arranged in the department such that a particular student cohort has, as far as possible, a single point of contact for student matters, enabling easier monitoring and tracking;
• The use of formative assessment techniques to identify progress concerns in advance of formal examinations or coursework deadlines;
• Formal, timetabled ‘review’ mechanisms (such as one-to-one meetings to follow up on examination performance);
• Students being made aware in course handbooks of the terms of the General University Regulations relating to attendance, specifically the possibility of being denied credit for modules where attendance has been unsatisfactory and also the application of penalties for late submission of assessed work (see “Revised Unified Penalties Policies on Student Non-Attendance, Non-Participation in Group Work, Late Submission and Special Dispensations” available from the SSiD website at www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/exams/policies - download “Penalties for Late Submission”).
• Computerised systems (e.g. a local database/Student Attendance Monitoring system) being used to manage departmental records of student non-attendance/non-submission of coursework etc., both as a means of managing follow-up correspondence to students as an aid to monitoring by year tutors, etc.
• Requiring students to report and explain any absence, via the completion of a Special Circumstances Form (www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/forms/circs);
• Letters/emails sent to students promptly when regular absence is detected;
• Informal ‘warnings’ being issued from a Programme Leader/Year Tutor, prior to the matter being referred on to a Director of Teaching or Head of Department etc. (guidance on wording of any letters may be obtained from the Student Engagement and Progress Team (SEP)).

The University of Sheffield’s Student Attendance Monitoring (SAM) system plays an integral part in identifying students whose engagement with their studies may be of concern and offers the opportunity to address these concerns at an early stage. The University’s Student Attendance Monitoring Policy and further guidance can be viewed online at: www.sheffield.ac.uk/sss/sas/sam

In the first instance it is expected that the student’s academic department would take appropriate action to address any issues. Where these efforts have failed and the situation cannot be resolved at departmental level, it is recommended that the student is referred under the Progress Procedures without delay by submitting a Progress Concerns Report to the Student Engagement and Progress team (sas.engagement.progress@sheffield.ac.uk)

Further information on how to do this is provided below.

**Departmental Referral to Faculty regarding a Student’s Progress**

In relation to modular degree programmes, referral from a department to the relevant Faculty is likely to be after week 6 of each semester (to enable time for departmental procedures), but can and should be submitted earlier if concerns are apparent. It is helpful if any Spring Semester reports are received at least one week before the Easter vacation. Where a report relates to performance during the previous academic session (for example in relation to attendance or progress during a year abroad), it will be appropriate for the report to be made very early in the new session.

Where departments require a student to meet with a Faculty Officer, please refer to the timetable for submission of these Progress Concerns Reports. It is sent to departmental contacts in August each year and is also available to view on the Student Administration Service web pages on Progress matters.
A standard Progress Concerns Report form should be completed within the department and forwarded to the Student Engagement and Progress team (the form can be downloaded from www.shef.ac.uk/sss/sas/progress).

On receipt of a Progress Concerns Report, the case will be considered in the light of the circumstances and the course of action suggested by the academic department: either to receive a progress concerns letter from Faculty; review by a Faculty Officer; or referral to a Faculty Student Review Committee with a view to exclusion.

Note that although students may theoretically be referred directly to the Faculty Student Review Committee without having previously been in receipt of a Progress letter or having been subject to review by a Faculty Officer, most Faculties have developed procedures for warning/counselling those students (who may then be referred to the Faculty Student Review Committee if their progress does not improve). The escalation of progress procedures from progress letter and then/or review by a Faculty Officer acts as a means of sifting cases before referring them to the Faculty Student Review Committee and a common approach has been established which is below.

**Student to Receive a Progress Concerns Letter from Faculty**
The letter will include an outline of the reasons why the student has been reported; signposting to University of Sheffield support services; a reminder of student responsibilities and the consequences that might arise should their engagement with their studies not show a marked improvement. The letter may also include, where attendance has been an issue and it is felt appropriate, an instruction that the student contact their department or the Student Engagement and Progress team by a deadline, confirming that they intend to continue with their studies. Failure to respond may result in the student being deemed withdrawn (after consultation with the student’s academic department). A copy of the letter will be sent to the relevant member of staff in the student’s department and will be held on the student’s central University record.

**Review of Student’s Progress by a Faculty Officer**
Where the case is to be reviewed by a Faculty Officer, the student will be asked to attend a Progress Concerns Interview with that Officer and a member of staff from the Student Administration Service. Depending on the circumstances of the case, the interview will normally involve a discussion of the reasons for unsatisfactory progress, with the student being given academic or other advice and guidance. This might include a reminder of the requirements of the General Regulations and the student’s responsibilities. The student might also be cautioned about the possible consequences of continued unsatisfactory progress (for example failure in examinations, the possibility of being denied credit for module/s in line with General Regulations or possible referral to the Faculty Student Review Committee with a view to exclusion from further study). The student’s options for the future might also be discussed (for example, a possible application for a period of leave of absence) and a referral might be made to one of the central University services, such as the Student Access to Mental Health Services; Academic Skills at 301 or to the Students’ Union Advice Centre.

The details of the interview are recorded on a Faculty Officer Interview Report. A copy of the report will also normally be provided to the student who will be given the opportunity to comment before a copy of the report is sent to the relevant member of staff in the student’s department, who may wish to take appropriate follow-up or monitoring action. A copy will also be uploaded on to the student’s central University record. The original Progress Concerns Report will normally be copied to the student, if this has not been done already.

If it is necessary to report a student on a second occasion, this should be indicated on the Progress Concerns Report form. Students reported for a second time would normally be expected to meet with a Faculty Officer. At this stage the Faculty Officer will suggest appropriate action(s) such as voluntary withdrawal on the part of the student, a reconsideration of the position in view of special circumstances not previously known, or the setting of a series of targets which the student would be
expected to meet. However, the Faculty Officer may, if deemed appropriate, choose to convene the Faculty Student Review Committee with a view to excluding the student.

If a student fails to attend a Progress Concerns Interview with a Faculty Officer without explanation, their case will be reviewed in their absence and the Faculty Officer will decide on a course of action based on the information included in the Progress Concerns Report, and pertinent information taken from CIS and the Attendance Monitoring system.

**Faculty Student Review Committee**

Standard procedures are in place for administering Faculty Student Review Committees (FSRC) and these are dealt with by the Student Engagement and Progress team. The formal procedures are set out in: *Notes on Procedure of Faculty Student Review Committees* available at www.shef.ac.uk/sss/sas/progress (click on ‘Progress Concerns and Faculty Student Review’ and then see the link under the heading ‘Procedures’). These Committees have the delegated power to exclude a student.

To assist staff in academic departments who have the responsibility for preparing a case for and attending an FSRC meeting, guidance is available on what to do and what to expect in: *Notes for members of staff attending Faculty Student Review Committees* available to download from www.sheffield.ac.uk/sss/sas/progress (click on ‘Progress Concerns and Faculty Student Review’ and then see the link under the heading ‘Downloads’).

**Appeals against the decision of the Faculty Student Review Committee**

Any subsequent appeals by students against exclusion by Faculty Student Review Committees are considered by the Senate Appeals Panel, which is administered by the Student Conduct and Appeals Office (contact Emma Brace, Ext. 21290, Email e.brace@sheffield.ac.uk).

A decision of the FSRC (other than one to allow the student to continue their programme of study unconditionally) will not take effect for taught students until a decision on their appeal has been made. Academic departments are usually expected to permit full time taught students, who appeal against the decision of the FSRC, to sit examinations/assessments in the current session and/or register provisionally in the following session (with the appropriate payment of fees) pending a decision on the appeal. Any concerns or queries should be raised with the Student Conduct and Appeals Office (contact Emma Brace, Ext 21290, Email e.brace@sheffield.ac.uk). Academic departments should only assess such examinations/assessments and record a mark or grade where the appeal is upheld and the student permitted to continue with the programme of study.

**Contacts**

If you need guidance on implementing any of these procedures in specific cases, please contact the Student Engagement and Progress team (www.sheffield.ac.uk/sss/sas/contacts).

Further information and guidance on Progress Concerns can be viewed online at: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/sss/sas/progress