

Guidelines for Staff for Semester 1, 2020

Supporting students during COVID-19
Academic Registrar's Group (ARG)
Results Management

16 April 2020

Background

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation has continued to evolve, and with absolute commitment to the health and safety of the community, RMIT has taken the advice and guidance of relevant authorities. With this advice in mind, on 22 March a decision was made to suspend all face-to-face learning and teaching activity on our Australian campuses until further notice.

We have progressively transitioned courses to online delivery wherever possible, to support our students in continuing their studies during this difficult time. As part of this process, we are continuing to implement measures that enable us to provide a quality digital experience to our community as an alternative to face-to-face delivery whilst maintaining academic and program integrity.

These guidelines provide information on the following key areas:

- Results
- Course Assessment Committees / Program Assessment Boards
- Academic Progress
- Alternative assessments and support for students registered with ELS

Results

In consideration of the impact of COVID-19, RMIT will support students during the first half of 2020 with two temporary changes to the management of results:

1. Student fail grades will be converted after the result release date and appear on student transcripts as a "Withdrawn from course" (WDR) grade and will not contribute towards the WAM/GPA calculation for their program.
2. The RNF (result not finalised) interim grade will be used for students who have not completed all the learning activities in their course/s.

To ensure global application and equity, all cohorts of students are included in these changes, HE (including Associate Degrees), Vocational Education, Foundation Studies, RMIT Online, OUA, RMIT Vietnam and all offshore partners. The only cohort not included is Research.

The published results processes and timelines for staff in 2020 can be located on this [website](#).

All student fail grades converted to WDR grades - Process

School/College staff enter all results, including fail grades into Results Processing Online (RPO) following the standard processes and timelines. These results are then approved via the Course Assessment Committees (CAC) and Program Assessment Boards (PAB). After the result release for each cohort, ARG will progressively change all fail grades to WDR grades. ARG will also monitor post result release grade changes (blank/interim to fail grades) and convert those to WDR accordingly.

For example, VE grades NYC and DNS will be converted to WDR and HE grades NN, NH will be converted to WDR.

Note:

- Students will see the fail grade(s) at the time of result release and these will progressively be converted to WDR grades. This allows students to seek a result review or appeal if they believe that they have not failed the course.
- CAC and PAB are to ensure that any students identified as being eligible for a supplementary assessment as per the assessment policy have their grade changed to the interim Supplementary (SUP) grade in RPO prior to RPO closing - this will ensure that the grade is not converted to a WDR grade through this process.
- Grade conversions will commence on 5 May 2020 for results released for offshore partners, SIM, Vietnam and continue through to the Melbourne result release on 13 July 2020.
- Vocational Education - As the WDR grade will be entered after the end date of the course RMIT will be able to claim full funding for the course. It will be essential to ensure that there is evidence of participation. RMIT only receives funding for two attempts by a student for each course.

Result releases (first half, 2020)

+ Weekly result releases for HE/VE flexible terms (In scope if the majority of the course is held in the first half of 2020)

+ Weekly postings for VE results (Wednesday nights from RPO)

Cohort/Term	Result release date
SHAPE - 2011 BH114 program	5 May
RMIT Online (Keypath - 6 teaching periods a year) – 2009 - TP2	8 May
SUIBE - 2008 AD010 program	22 May
KAPLAN – 2011	25 May
SIM – 2020	28 May
Vietnam – 2091	15 June
SHAPE - 2011 - remaining programs (BH070, BH075, BH077 & BP077)	19 June
SUIBE - 2008 – Diploma and Bachelor programs	19 June
Foundation studies – 2005	26 June
RMIT Online - 4 teaching periods a year – 2009 – TP2	26 June
Hong Kong Art School - 2008	30 June
VE onshore - 1905/1945 (for full and cross year) and 2005	2 July
AD onshore - 2010 (ASD session)	2 July
RMIT Online (Keypath - 6 teaching periods a year) – 2009 - TP3	3 July
OUA UGRD – 2007 & 2004 SP1	6 July
SIM – 2030	7 July
HE onshore – 2010	13 July
OUA PGRD – 2006 – SS1	13 July

Fail grades to WDR process



RNF grades used for students who have not completed all learning activities in course/s - Process

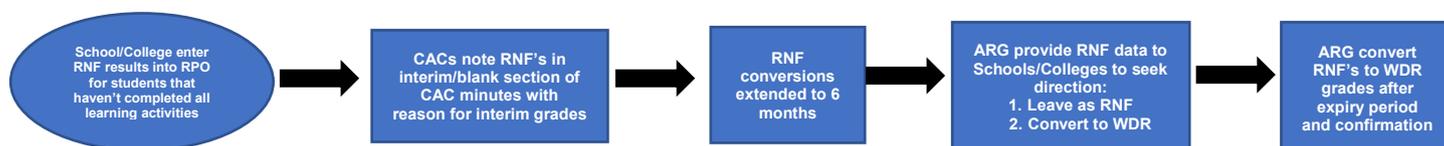
School/College staff are to enter RNF grades into RPO for any students that have not completed all of the learning activities in their course. The CAC minutes 'blank and interim results' section should be updated with the detail/s of the missing assessment component/s. The RNF grade usually expires three months from the result release, however it will now be extended to six months to support the finalisation of assessments where students have experienced delays due to COVID-19.

For example, a WIL/Placement that will need to be completed later in the year, during Sem 2, 2020.

Note:

- There may be a need to further extend some RNF grades beyond the six-month period due to the unpredictable nature of the COVID-19 situation and possible limited opportunities for WIL/Placements, there may also be a back log.
- Schools/Colleges may need to consider prioritising/graduating/international students to finalise course assessment requirements.
- The RNF interim grade for a course/s in Sem 1 may require some students to seek academic advice for Sem 2, course enrolments and wherever possible, specific pre-requisites that have not been met because of an RNF grade will be waived in Semester 2, 2020.
- Possible enrolment load issue, where a small number of students will need to complete one or two learning activities from Sem 1 while they are concurrently enrolled in Sem 2 course/s. It is expected that the majority of the Sem 1 learning activities would be completed as students commence in Sem 2 courses.

RNF process



CAC PAB

- 1- The CAC minutes "blank and interim results" section should be updated with the detail/s of the missing assessment component/s for each course and student. Assessment Support and Exams circulates to schools/colleges regular non-final grades reports to assist with identification of interim results that require finalisation.
- 2- The CAC and PAB should ensure that any students identified as being eligible for a supplementary assessment as per the assessment policy have their grade changed to the interim supplementary (SUP) grade in RPO prior to RPO closing. This will eliminate the risk of the grade being incorrectly converted to a WDR during this temporary change to grades processes.

Academic Progress

Due to the above-mentioned changes to grades during the first half 2020 there will also need to be temporary changes to [Academic Progress processes](#). With fail grades being converted to WDR, Academic Progress (Assessment Processes 6.5) criteria 1 and 3 will not be valid grounds in the first half of 2020.

Criteria 1 - Has failed (or been deemed Not Yet Competent in) 50% or more of enrolled course load in a compulsory semester or teaching period. (Including where the student has failed to achieve the elements of the performance criteria at the six month review point of a competency which is delivered over a period greater than six months.)

Criteria 3 - Has failed a course or received a final not yet competent NYC grade for a competency a second time.

Criteria 2, and 4 to 9 are still valid and may be communicated as first or final stages for those students identified by the PAB.

Criteria 2 – Has failed to comply with conditions prescribed in an academic performance improvement plan.

Criteria 4 – Has failed or demonstrated unsafe practice or performed in a manner deemed professionally unacceptable in a clinical or practical placement course.

Criteria 5 – Has failed the thesis/project component of a one-year Honours program.

Criteria 6 – Has demonstrated that progress through a program will not allow completion of the program in the maximum time allowed for that program.

Criteria 7 – Has demonstrated that progress through a program will not allow completion of the program in the expected duration for that program (as stated in the eCOE) and has not shown compelling circumstances to explain the lack of progress.

Criteria 8 – Has failed to meet progress requirements prescribed in the ESOS Act 2000 or other regulations that affect eligibility for an Australian student visa.

Criteria 9 – Has not met the timelines prescribed in the apprentices/trainees training plan.

During COVID-19 impacted teaching periods in the first half 2020 there is discretion for the Chair of PAB to support students who have compassionate/compelling circumstances. For example, for OUA/RMIT Online students who are completing their first teaching period in May 2020, the Chair could elect to only send first stage notifications on this occasion.

Assessment Processes state:

6.11.1. The chair of the relevant program assessment board (or in a vocational education program, the program manager) has discretion, however, not to classify a student as final stage at risk, but to allow them to continue in the program at first stage at risk, if the student is close to completing the program or where compassionate and compelling circumstances known to the school exist.

Alternative assessments and support for students registered with Equitable Learning Services

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, and to ensure the safety of staff and students all face to face exams in 2020 will not be held. Exams have now been replaced with authentic assessments or alternative equivalent assessments. There may be a limited number of decentralised, 'timed' exams in Canvas arranged locally by individual schools/colleges. Due to the decentralised model in 2020 the usual centralised exam timetable will not be appropriate. For those schools/colleges who have 'timed' exams, timetabling guidance is available, please contact Academic Registrar's Group, Assessment Support and Exams - assessment.support@rmit.edu.au .

Students registered with the Equitable Learning Services (ELS) and who have exam provisions in their ELP (Equitable Learning Plan) should contact ELS directly for any assistance that may be required to support them during exams.

If you have any questions in relation to this guideline document, please email the Assessment Support and Exams team at assessment.support@rmit.edu.au for assistance.

FAQ's for Students

Results

Why have these changes to results been made?

These changes have been introduced by RMIT to support all students in the first half of 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19.

Why do I have an RNF (Result not finalised) at the time of result release?

You may not have had the opportunity to complete some of your learning activities. Once these are completed the RNF grade will be finalised.

What is a WDR grade?

WDR, "Withdrawn from course" is a final grade, that does not contribute to your GPA or WAM.

Why do I have a WDR grade for my course?

During the first half of 2020, RMIT is supporting students due to the impact of COVID-19 and converting all fail grades to WDR.

Why do I have a fail grade at the time of result release?

If you have a fail grade(s) at the time of result release these will be progressively converted to WDR.

Does the WDR grade affect my GPA or WAM?

The WDR does not contribute to your GPA or WAM for your program.

Can I have my previous fail grade(s) on my transcript converted to WDR?

Only those courses which have been impacted by COVID-19 in the first half of 2020 will be converted to WDR.

Can I have the course enrolment removed from my transcript rather than a WDR grade?

All course enrolments are included on transcripts at RMIT.

If my fail grade is converted to WDR, will that mean that my course fees are refunded?

Course fees are not refunded if you fail your course and the result is converted to a WDR. If you need assistance due to COVID-19, please visit the RMIT's Student Hardship Assistance and Equity Scholarship information [website](#).

I am a Research student, does this change apply to me?

Research students are not included in this temporary change to results.

Which semester does this change to results apply to?

These changes are for Semester 1, 2020.

I have a fail grade but I don't think that I failed the course, now it has been converted to a WDR, what should I do?

You can still contact your course coordinator/Program manager to request a review of your final grade.

Who should I contact if I would like to have my final grade reviewed?

You are entitled to seek a review for your final grade for a course by contacting your course coordinator/Program manager.

Am I still able to appeal my final fail grade, even though it has been converted to a WDR?

After seeking a review of the final grade, you may be eligible to appeal the final fail grade for the course.

Academic Progress

As I don't have any fail grades this semester 1, 2020, will academic progress still apply?

Some of the academic progress grounds are still valid and if you have been identified as failing to meet acceptable academic progress, you may still be sent a first or final stage 'at risk' communication.

How will I know if this change to results and academic progress applies to me?

If you are enrolled in courses in the first half of 2020 then these changes will apply to you. Please note that Research students are not included in this temporary change to results.

How will I be supported if I have failed courses in Sem 1, 2020?

Your school/college will communicate directly with you via your RMIT student email account.

If I have been impacted by COVID-19 will this be taken into account?

Yes, if you are identified as final stage and asked to Show Cause, you should communicate all your circumstances, providing evidence documents if possible to the PAB chair so they can take this into consideration.