

# **Academic Warning: Getting Back on Track**



**Support for academic success**

# Want to get back on track?

This booklet introduces strategies that will help you get back on track in Semester Two.

**Part One:** Information about Academic Warning and Advice.

**Part Two:** A reflection and planning template for you to work things through yourself

**Part Three:** Ideas and help available to support a successful Semester Two

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*Whāia te iti kahurangi ki te tūohu koe me he maunga teitei*

## Translation

Seek the treasure you value most dearly: if you bow your head, let it be to a lofty mountain.

## Interpretation

Never give up, no matter what obstacles come your way; persevere, get back on track and reach your goal.

## Thoughts from other well known people

“Success is stumbling from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm.”  
Winston Churchill

“Failure is so important. We speak about success all the time. It is the ability to resist failure or use failure that often leads to greater success.”  
J.K. Rowling

# Part One

## Academic Warning

If you have received an Academic Warning notification in your eVision portal this resource is to help you figure out what that means and what to do about it.

First of all, you are not alone! Many students find the first semester of their first year at university does not go as well as they hoped for. Over half of first year students struggle with one or more of their papers in their first semester. This reflects that the transition from school to university is a challenge. It takes time to get used to a very different learning environment, the greater level of personal responsibility and often you are living in a different environment.

*It's not too late to 'get back on track'.*

You will have learnt a lot about learning at university in your first semester. As your capacity to learn is not fixed, the learning skills you developed in Semester One will help you improve your ability to study in Semester Two. The University also provides opportunities to help you develop your learning capability – so make the most of them and use Student Learning Development.

### What does Academic Warning mean for you?

Academic Warning is just that, a warning that the University has noticed that your first semester didn't go well. There are no formal consequences to getting a warning. You can continue to study this year but you need to address the challenges you faced in the first semester so you can get “get back on track” for Semester Two.

To get back on track here are some actions we suggest you need to take.

Step 1: Aim to have a successful Semester Two.

Step 2: Review, reflect and identify your challenges in Semester One.

Step 3: Set goals for your university study and your career.

You will also need to know about **Conditional Enrolment**. Many students who get an Academic Warning will end up on Conditional Enrolment if over the whole year academic you fail more than half of your points (papers). This is not the end of your academic journey! You can still enrol next year but there will be some conditions placed on your enrolment, such as limiting your workload and the requirement for a study plan. You still have next year to get back on track. See the Academic Progression Policy <http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/otago028376.html> .

## ***Aim to have a successful Semester Two.***

Semester Two is all about being successful, getting back on track, so you can move forward with a clearer direction into your next year of university. Please note, International students must visit Student Visa Services in the International Office before making any changing in your degree.

### ***Some advice to help you to be successful in Semester Two***

#### ***a. Work to your strengths***

Take subjects you liked and did well in at school or/and in your first semester. Don't worry too much about your degree or your major, it will probably change, once you are sorted and back on track. The most important thing is to have a successful Semester Two so taking subjects you did well in helps with your engagement and success in Semester Two papers.

#### ***b. If it didn't work, change track***

If your first semester papers didn't go as well as you hoped, change track. Don't take papers in the same subject area in Semester Two. Work to your strengths.

#### ***c. Control your workload***

The main goal is to be successful in Semester Two so if you were struggling to keep up when taking 4 papers, give yourself break and limit yourself to 3 papers in your second semester. This will help you have a successful semester and have a life. However if you failed 4 papers in your first semester, and take 3 paper in Semester Two you will end up on conditional enrolment. But remember, conditional enrolment is no big deal, it gives you another year to get back on track.

## **Part Two**

### ***How to use this resource***

This booklet will help you develop a plan that works for you to get back on track for Semester Two.

You need to think about your strengths and the challenges that affected your first semester success. Then make a plan for your second semester success that address the challenges you identified. Definitely talk with someone. You will be contacted and be given the opportunity to talk with a staff member. Also set some goals; think about why you are at university and what you want to achieve long term. This online resource can help

<https://www.otago.ac.nz/hedc/students/digital/otago654505.pdf>.

# Review and Reflect

*What are your strengths?* (Don't be too hard on yourself, but be honest)

What subjects did you like and do well in at in school?

What lectures, assignments or papers went well in Semester One?

My academic strengths include:

***What were your challenges in Semester One?***

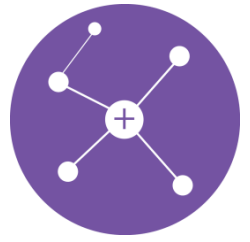
What were the challenges to your academic success?

(List all the challenges you can think of that affected your first semester)

Reflect on these challenges and think about which challenge had the greatest influence on your academic success.

Biggest challenge	
2 <sup>nd</sup> biggest challenge	
3 <sup>rd</sup> biggest challenge	
4 <sup>th</sup> biggest challenge	

# Have a plan



*Note down your challenges, largest first, and make notes on what you think you can do to address these challenges. Look in Part 3 for ideas and for people to help you create a plan for Semester Two.*

Challenges	What will I do to address this challenge
1 <sup>st</sup>	
2 <sup>nd</sup>	
3 <sup>rd</sup>	
4 <sup>th</sup>	

# Set Some Goals



## ***WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE?***

Write down your goals which will help you to know why you are here.

### *University goals*

What do you want out of attending university?

What skills and knowledge do you want to develop?

What degree do you want to graduate with?

### *Long term goals*

What kind of career are you after?

What kind of life do you want?



## Part Three

### *Tips for a successful Semester Two*

1. **Know why you're here.** To be successful you need to know why you are at university. However, to find out what you want to do is a valid reason to be at university as you can be exposed to a wide range of papers. Unsure, see Career Development Centre.
2. **Go to class.** Attend all lectures, labs and tutorials. Your lecturers let you know what you need to know and set the assessment to test the material that they consider is important for their paper.
3. **Unpack your paper.** The paper's Blackboard page/outline/manual/course book contains all the critical information you need for your success; including the support on offer, assessments, due dates, late penalties, citation rules, office hours, terms requirements and exam information.
4. **Plan your time.** Set up a calendar as soon as you have unpacked your paper. Enter all your lectures, labs, tutorials; the due dates and the value for all your assignments, and most importantly, when to start each assignment. Add in your sports, social and other commitments. *E*-calendars are great as you can set up repeating events. Now you have an overview of your time. Remember each paper expects you to put in 12 hours of work each week and most of it is in your own time so planning your time helps.
5. **Prepare.** Know the learning outcomes for each paper will help you organise and prioritise your study. Download the lecture notes and read them before going to the lecture, maybe even do some background reading. Go to your tutorials and labs prepared.
6. **Exams.** It is never too early to start preparing for exams, but definitely get into exam study straight after the mid semester break. Download the past exams from the library <http://www.otago.ac.nz/library/exams/>. Go to an exam workshop at Student Learning Development (SLD), work out the format and timing for in the exam and have a study timetable.
7. **Ask.** Ask if you are unsure, ask early and if the answer doesn't help ask someone else. There is a list of places to ask in this booklet.

## *Who can help?*



Remember that part of being at university is learning how to be a student. Here's a list and services who can offer support and advice to guide you along your journey.

### ***GENERAL ADVICE (for pastoral, academic and social support)***

- **Your College staff.**
- **Locals program:** provides academic, social and sporting support to first year students flatting, boarding or living at home in their first year at Otago University.  
<http://locals.otago.ac.nz> and <http://www.facebook.com/OtagoLocals>
- **OUSA:** your students association provides students with representation, welfare, advocacy, budget advice, study link support, recreation, fun events and media. We are completely independent from the rest of the University.  
<http://www.ousa.org.nz>
- **International Student Advisers:** are available on a confidential basis to assist international students with any issues or questions that may arise during their time at Otago and can refer you to Student Visa Services as needed.  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/international>
- **The Māori Centre, Te Huka Mātauraka:** offers a home away from home for Māori students and provide academic and pastoral support.  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/maoricentre>
- **Māori Health Workforce Development Unit (MHWDU)** aims to support Māori academic excellence in Health Sciences and increase the Māori health workforce.  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/mhwdu>
- **The Pacific Islands Centre** provides academic and pastoral support to pacific students.  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/pacific>
- **Pacific Island Health Sciences Students (PIRSSU):** provides academic guidance and support to pacific students studying in the Division of Health Sciences.  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/pirssu>

## ***ACADEMIC ADVICE***

- **Student Learning Development:** offers workshops, resources, consultations support and peer learning programmes to first year students and beyond. Below is a list of specific workshops, resources and peer learning programmes that are useful for first year students.

<http://sld.otago.ac.nz>

### ***Consultations***

One-to-one consultations with a student learning adviser are free and confidential. You can make an appointment by email, phone or visit us at the south-west corner of the Central Library (ISB) Building. We provide advice aimed at improving your academic success and learning experience.

### ***Workshops***

Register for Student Learning Development workshops online at:

<http://sld.otago.ac.nz/attend-a-workshop>

Workshops for First Year students include:

- Study Skills Workshops (Note-taking, Time Management, Reading for Understanding, Mind Mapping, Presentation Skills, Academic Integrity, and Exam Revision Skills)
- Writing and Language Workshops (Writing Your First Assignment, Writing Better Sentences and Paragraphs, Essay Writing, Summarising and Paraphrasing, and Essays for Exams)

### ***Resources***

Sometimes it's hard to know where to start on an assignment, how to study for exams, or the best way to develop your writing or other academic skills. The Student Learning Development team has produced some excellent online resources to help you with a wide range of common tasks.

Visit the Student Learning Development website and check out our study skills resources:

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/hedc/students/digital>

### ***Peer Learning Programmes***

Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) are fun group-based study sessions led by an experienced student who has successfully completed the course. Check out whether your papers are available and register for PASS at: <http://hedc.otago.ac.nz/workshop/list.do?type=PASS>

Studying at 100 level and need some help with your assignment? You can get help from a senior student on: Unpacking the assignment question, planning/structuring your assignment, grammar and punctuation, and sentence and paragraph structure.

Find out more about Peer Writers at:

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/hedc/students/peer>

- **English Language Support:**

*Conversational English*: sessions are held each day at the Student Learning Development Office. They are very informal, casual sessions, facilitated by two Kiwi students. The aim of the sessions is to improve your confidence in speaking English, and your understanding of spoken English. The sessions are very fun and relaxed, and very helpful.

*Language Mentoring* matches you with a trained Language Mentor. You will meet with them one on one, and they will help you with any specific problems you may be having with English (our Language Mentors are not trained to help you with your assignments or study), or they may just chat with you and help you to come up with methods for improving your English.

Both of these programs are absolutely free!

For further information regarding Conversational English or the Language Mentor programme contact Lucy Prestidge ([lucy.prestidge@otago.ac.nz](mailto:lucy.prestidge@otago.ac.nz)) or visit <http://www.otago.ac.nz/hedc/students/peer> .

## **ADMINISTRATIVE ADVICE**

- **Fee Enquiries:** any problems with fees at the university, see these staff.  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/study/fees>
- **Student Computing:** If you have any computer problems contact Student IT. They have a help desk in the Central Library.  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/studentit>

## ***WELLBEING ADVICE***

- **Student Health:** provides a comprehensive range of primary health care services to the student population, including doctor, nurse, mental health & well-being and psychiatry appointments.  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/studenthealth>
- **Disabilities Information and Support:** provides learning support, advice, advocacy and information to students with disabilities, impairments, medical conditions or injuries.  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/disabilities>
- **University Chaplaincy Team:** provides pastoral care, spiritual support and guidance, prayer, help with homesickness or grief, or just a listening ear regardless of beliefs.  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/chaplain>
- **Unipol Recreation Services:** offers a huge choice of recreational activities, including cardio and weights, sports halls, group fitness, outdoor rental, social sport and outdoor adventures.  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/recreation>

## ***COURSE ADVICE***

- **Divisional Course Advice staff** can help you with specific degree advice.  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/course-advice/services>
- **Change of Course Form** from the University Information Centre.  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/study/enrolment/changingcourse.html>

## ***STUDENT ADVICE***

- **Career Development Centre:** to see where you are heading.  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/careers>
- **Schools Liaison:** If you are really unsure about your studies you can talk to a Schools Liaison.  
[http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/service\\_divisions/otago029897.html](http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/service_divisions/otago029897.html)

# Checklist for Effective Study

- I have read all the paper outlines/overviews, I have a good idea of what is expected of me and have noted all the due dates and value of my assessments in my calendar.
- I have marked when to start work on my assignments in my calendar.
- I know who the course coordinators/tutors/administrators are in all my courses and their office hours so I know where to get help.
- I know the resources I need for the course and have easy access to them.
- I regularly check Blackboard for course announcements, resources etc.
- I am attending all the lectures/tutorials/labs/workshops for my papers.
- Before* lectures, I have downloaded the notes and prepared for class.
- During* each lecture I am actively engaged in class, listening, processing and making notes about the material presented.
- Within 2 days after* each lecture, I have written up my lecture notes, I have asked myself questions about the material, added useful notes and followed up on the things I didn't understand.
- I organise and file my notes and handouts regularly.
- I know what the Student Learning Development office is for and where it is.
- I know about extra opportunities that will support my learning (e.g. college tutorials, PASS, study groups and on-line resources).
- Every week I spend 12 hours study for each of my papers.