

RUSU Exclusion Information Pack for Students

This pack contains:

- ◆ A template of how to structure an Exclusion letter.
- ◆ Some sample Exclusion letters. ***These are examples only. Make sure you review the Template and use your OWN circumstances and personal experiences to write your letter.***
- ◆ Information about documentary evidence, including what it is, why it is important and some examples.
- ◆ Information about a study plan and examples of what a study timetable might look like
- ◆ A copy of the form required by RMIT to lodge an Appeal Against Exclusion (which **must** be completed and submitted with your appeal).
- ◆ A leaflet explaining the Exclusion process and the impact of Exclusion/what happens from here.

What should I do now?

Make sure you contact RUSU Student Rights to join one of our Exclusion Group Information Sessions. Once you have attended a Group Information Session, you can use this pack to help you to write your letter. Then, you can make an appointment with a Student Rights Officer who will help to read over your letter, help you to improve or finalise your letter, and answer any further questions you may have. You should bring a draft Exclusion letter to this appointment, or email it to your designated Student Rights Officer beforehand.

Need more information?

Call RUSU:

City/Carlton campus on 9925 5004 or 9925 1842

Bundoora campus on 9925 7226

Brunswick campus on 9925 9478

Or

Email RUSU Student Rights: student.rights@rmit.edu.au

RUSU Template for How to Write an Exclusion Letter

HINTS

- ◆ **Have you attended an Exclusion Group Session?** If not, make sure you book in for one by contacting RUSU.
- ◆ **After you've been to a group session** and ideally prepared a draft letter, contact RUSU to make an appointment with a Student Rights Officer who can help you to fine tune your appeal.
- ◆ **Download a copy of the Appeal Against Exclusion form** from <http://mams.rmit.edu.au/tchwzxekee32.pdf>. You must complete this form to lodge an appeal.
- ◆ **You are not automatically granted a hearing at the University Appeals Committee (UAC).** You must meet at least one of the four **grounds of appeal** listed on the form. If you aren't sure whether you meet the grounds of appeal, or which one is right, discuss this with a Student Rights Officer.
- ◆ **Documentary evidence** is vital to support your statement – read below.
- ◆ **Consider your program** – are you near the end of your program? Are you in the right program? Would you benefit from a leave of absence?
- ◆ **Clearly explain the reasons** why you were unable to pass your courses in the semesters where you failed – and what things are now in place to ensure you succeed in the future.

Include an introduction, where you state the grounds that you are appealing on.

Dear University Appeals Committee Secretariat,

I am writing to appeal against exclusion from my program (**NAME and PROGRAM CODE**) on the following grounds of appeal (***pick one or more that apply***):

- ◆ There is evidence that the penalty of exclusion is unreasonable, excessive or inappropriate (this includes evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances (***this is generally the most relevant grounds of appeal that students select***));
- ◆ There is evidence of a breach of the Assessment: academic progress (coursework programs) procedure or another relevant University statute or regulation, policy or procedure in the handing of the exclusion process;
- ◆ There is evidence that the decision was made on the basis of personal bias or ill will (***this can be very difficult to prove and is an uncommon ground***); and/or
- ◆ There is significant new, relevant evidence that was not available at the time the student was required to 'show cause' why they should not be excluded (***if you are thinking of appealing on this ground – talk to a Student Rights Officer! The evidence must be new and not have been possible to collect until AFTER you submitted your Show Cause letter***).

Your letter then needs to be broken down into four parts.

1. An outline of what were the difficult circumstances that you experienced over the semesters where you failed courses.
2. How those circumstances ***directly impacted/got in the way of***, you being able to study successfully.
3. What has improved/how are things different now/what changes have been made that will make it better for you to study successfully.

4. Why your appeal meets the grounds of appeal.

The following is an example of what the introduction can sound like. Address specifically the semesters where you failed courses:

Over the past two semesters/*OR* since the beginning of my program/ *OR* last semester I experienced a number of difficult circumstances, many of them which were unexpected, that directly affected my ability to be able to study and achieve my full potential.

Provide information about:

- ◆ What went wrong in that given semester/s where you failed your courses/subjects?
- ◆ What happened?
- ◆ Were you or somebody close to you sick?
- ◆ Did you do paid work for too many hours?
- ◆ Did you experience financial difficulties?
- ◆ Was there a stressful situation that you were dealing with? Breakup of a relationship?
- ◆ Did somebody you love pass away?
- ◆ Did you feel isolated or depressed? Did you not know about services that could help you?
- ◆ Is this your first year at Uni, did you find the whole experience overwhelming/isolating?
- ◆ Did an illness you have (or someone close to you) have a direct impact on your ability to study?
- ◆ Were you caring for someone in your family?
- ◆ Do you have any evidence about what went wrong? Medical certificates, doctor's/counsellor's letters?

Then, explain how did the above directly affect your ability to study?

You want to be able to show that normally you do have the ability to pass your courses but because of those things that happened, your studies suffered.

For example:

- ◆ You experienced sadness, depression, anxiety. This made you lose your motivation and you found it difficult to go to classes or to concentrate. You found it difficult to sleep, you always felt tired, alone. Your family did not know that you were struggling.
- ◆ You had financial problems and had to work many hours taking your time away from School. Perhaps you needed to give your family money in your home country or to help your family pay for expenses here in Australia. You were often working late shifts which paid more money but it meant you were constantly tired and found it difficult to get out of bed ready for University in the mornings. You were so tired it was difficult to focus in lectures.
- ◆ Your mum has been unwell for a number of months. Your father works full time and is very rarely at home. You have a number of younger brother and sisters. As the oldest child you have had to take on most of the work at home. You do the food shopping, clean the house, prepare food, do the laundry and look after your brothers and sisters. Your mother needs help being driven to all of her appointments. If your mum has a medical appointment you have to miss class to take her as no one else can do it. If your younger brother or sister are

sick you have to stay home to look after them. It makes it hard to plan your studies and your assignments when you don't know when you will be needed at home. Sometimes you have to miss class to be at home and it is difficult to catch up when you have so much to do.

What has improved/how are things different now/what changes have been made that will make it better for you to study successfully?

In this part of the letter you should write about what you have already done, and what will you continue to do, to ensure that you are able to undertake your studies more successfully in the future.

Things to consider when writing this section of the letter are:

- ◆ What have you done to address what happened in the past?
- ◆ Have your circumstances changed?
- ◆ What assistance have you sought? Counsellor, doctor, Study & Learning Centre, SLAMS, PASS sessions, peer study groups?
- ◆ Do you know of services that can support/help you now? What are they, have you used any?
- ◆ Have you cut back on your paid work? Are you not required to work any more?
- ◆ Dig out your old Academic Performance Improvement plan from when you were first placed At Risk. Did you go to your meeting with an academic advisor? If not, how come?
- ◆ What were the recommendations of the advisor? Were there any? Did you follow them? If so, write about how that may have helped, and if not, why?
- ◆ How can you demonstrate that you are not at risk of failing again?
- ◆ Are you going to reduce your study load to part time?
- ◆ Are you taking a leave of absence to have a rest from study?
- ◆ Create a study plan/study timetable for this or the next semester
- ◆ If some of the issues that impacted on your studies still exist, ***how will you manage these things so that they don't interfere with your studies to the same extent?***

The University Appeals Committee wants to feel confident that if you are allowed to continue in your program, that you will pass your courses.

Lastly, you need to explain how your appeal meets the grounds of appeal you have selected.

For example, if you are appealing on the grounds that to exclude you would be 'excessive, unreasonable or inappropriate', focus on why it is unreasonable and excessive to exclude you. Connect the circumstances that were beyond your control to why you failed specific subjects and how things that have changed or how you will do things differently. Make an argument for why is an unreasonable punishment to exclude you, when you have taken steps to turn things around.

Remember you must provide evidence to go with your letter to support what you are saying.

Go the link below to access 'Examples of documentary evidence' information or read on in this pack for some examples:

<http://www.su.rmit.edu.au/assets/Uploads/Need-Help/Handouts/Examples-Of-Documentary-Evidence.pdf>

You can write: To support my letter of exclusion, please find attached the following documentary evidence:

- ◆ *List the evidence you have included, eg. Doctor's letter, bank statement, work roster, etc.*

You can conclude your letter with a statement like the following:

I believe that the above letter indicates the exceptional/unexpected/severe circumstances that have occurred and strongly affected my ability to perform academically to my full potential. I believe that I meet the grounds of appeal and would be willing to attend a hearing to discuss my case. I hope you will consider my case and allow me to continue in my program.

Yours sincerely,,

Your Name

Disclaimer:

The information in this leaflet is a general guide only. RMIT is a very complex environment, and there are often a number of different rules which apply. Always ask a Student Rights Officer if you're not sure!

For more student rights information visit our website: www.su.rmit.edu.au/student-rights

Examples of Documentary Evidence

Where possible, it is important to support your Show Cause letter with documentary evidence, to support what you are saying in your letter. Your case will be **much stronger** with evidence. Evidence can be used to support the reasons why your academic performance was affected (eg a notice from your landlord giving you thirty days to leave), as well as the things that are supporting your studies to get back on track (eg a lease agreement for your new home).

Remember, never provide **original documents** to RMIT, **make copies and keep the originals for yourself**, as you will not get them back.

Examples – remember this list is not exhaustive! Other evidence or documents you have may be relevant to your case.

Medical Evidence

- Medical reports and/or doctors certificates
- RMIT Medical or Health Grounds Impact Statement (these are required when applying for special consideration at RMIT)
- A counsellor's statement (as additional support for cases of depression, etc.).

Non-Medical Evidence

- A police report.
- A statutory declaration- a written statement declared to be true in the presence of an authorised witness. Be aware that a person who wilfully makes a false statement in a statutory declaration is guilty of an offence and may be fined or jailed, or both.
- A counsellor's statement/letter.
- A death certificate of a close relative – often this is quite hard to obtain as a family going through the trauma of a death may not have a death certificate on hand, or you may not feel comfortable asking for it off family members. Funeral notices, death notices and letter from funeral homes can also be submitted.
- Proof of attendance at support services from referrals and/ or recommendations you agreed to attend as part of your Academic Improvement Plan.
- Letters from landlords or employers - for cases such as pipes bursting, or other household emergencies and extra hours or reduction in work hours or a traumatic event that occurred at work.
- Eviction notice, or a lease showing date you moved house.
- Letters from family/friends/lecturers/community members/religious or spiritual leaders in your life verifying what happened to you or your ability to be successful in your studies.
- Email confirming enrolment in Study and Learning Centre Workshops.
- Good results for individual assessments (particularly for subjects you failed) - this shows that you generally have a good academic track record or that you have turned a corner and your academic performance is improving.
- Study timetable you have made to help you in future- see below for more info.
- Emails sent to or from lecturers or RMIT staff where you have asked for assistance, re- assessment of your grades, raised problems etc.
- Attendance records showing that you are or did attend all your classes.
- Emails from other students saying you are studying in a group with them and they are going to assist you in the future.
- Evidence you have a tutor to help you now.

Example of an Appeal Against Exclusion Letter

Dear University Appeals Secretariat,

My name is XXXX and I am in the XXXX year of my Program (**INSERT PROGRAM NAME HERE**). Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to explain to why I should be allowed to continue in my program. I ask you to please consider the following account of circumstances that have affected my studies, and the reasons why I am confident that I can successfully complete my degree if I am allowed to continue.

I am appealing on the following grounds: *insert the grounds of appeal you have selected on the form.*

Then, describe what happened during semester. You should expand upon the circumstances you provided in your Show Cause letter if you submitted one.

Upon the commencement of my studies, I was completely focused and dedicated and with the exception of failing one course in my first semester, I was able to complete my other courses successfully. It was in the second semester that I experienced the *break-up of my relationship/my mother became unwell/my grandfather passed away/my parents separated/I experienced serious accommodation issues/I was devastated at that time because XXXXX which interrupted my studies.* (**insert your personal circumstances**).

I started to experience anxiety and now that I have had the opportunity to reflect on that time, I believe that I also was suffering from depression.

I was not able to talk to anybody about my issue/grief and I had to keep my problem to myself. I was not aware of services at RMIT like the Counselling service who assist students for free until recently. Increasingly I noticed that my motivation for study began to decline. I found it difficult to sleep and experienced interrupted sleep for many months. Some mornings I could not get out of bed to make it to class on time. I found it really hard to concentrate and everything took longer for me to complete.

Did you apply for special consideration during semester at all?

I found myself falling behind with my studies and I lost a lot of confidence. I did not apply for special consideration *because XXXXX OR I applied for special consideration on a few occasions* but I still went on to fail my courses *because XXXX*.

It became harder and harder for me to concentrate on anything and finish my assignments or exam preparations on time.

OR

I suffer from anxiety and or depression but this has been undiagnosed in the past

OR

There was a particular event or series of events that triggered and caused my anxiety/depression to worsen.

OR

In my very first semester at University, I had genuinely significant transition issues going from TAFE/High School to University, which was disappointing for me as I was really excited to be commencing my program. This is evident from my first semester results. I found the adjustment from TAFE/High School to Uni to take me some time and to be initially quite challenging.

It was a combination of a number of factors, such as the changes in the way that lessons were taught, a less personalised approach to study, the increased and more complex work load, missing some of the introductory courses (by getting credit recognition) and skipping the first year courses.

Previously in TAFE/High School there were very few exams that I had to encounter, instead it was essentially primarily assignments and tests as assessments. In doing my exams in the first semester of 2014, I found that I was not as prepared in the way that was necessary to pass and that I was unable to finish my exams and suffered from blanking out and nervousness on the day.

By not knowing how to undertake and prepare myself for exams in an effective way, as well as my study habits in using my time more efficiently, I ended up failing. I was extremely disappointed at the outcome of my first semester.

Then, talk about the future – and how you plan to address the issues that have affected your studies. Below are some examples of sentences that a student might write depending on their situation and the support they now have. Remember – use your own experiences.

Upon being asked to show cause/being notified I had been recommended for Exclusion, I sought out support from the Student Union and I became aware of services that I had not previously known about.

For example:

I have since seen a counsellor at RMIT who I will continue to meet with if I am allowed to continue in my program. If I feel like I need some emotional support throughout semester or if my stress/anxiety increases again I can book an appointment to talk with someone.

OR

I have been placed on a mental health plan/I have since commenced taking medication/I have been speaking with my GP about my mental health and I have found that this has helped me a lot.

OR

I have/will register with the Disability Liaison Unit as I continue to be affected by depression and or anxiety. By doing this I will be able to undertake my studies with the support of individual Equitable Assessment Arrangements which I have not done previously.

OR

I have a new job, I am only working ten hours a week, which is very manageable for my study load, while also meaning the financial pressure I was previously under has lessened / I have moved back home with my parents and they are supporting me financially / I am now living in stable accommodation.

I have looked into and will access the various relevant support services for students at the study and learning centre/ will seek help from SLAM'S to make sure I finish my assignments and exam preparations before time and have enough time to review all my study work (*if you have used these services previously, say so!*)

I believe I am in a much more stable position going into this semester and feel that these changes have addressed the issues that have impacted on my study in the past. I therefore believe it would be excessive and unreasonable to exclude me, given the changes I have made in my life and the fact that I am now in a position to demonstrate my full academic abilities.

I have created a study plan for myself which will help improve my performance in the upcoming semester by assisting me to manage my time and study hours. I have attached a copy of

my study plan which shows the hours of study required for each subject I am enrolled in this coming semester.

Then, you need a closing paragraph.

I am very committed to completing my degree and it would be a great loss to me to have to interrupt my studies now that I am feeling so strong and determined. Given the changes that I have made, the commitment that I demonstrate and the evidence that I can study successfully when circumstances in my life are stable, I believe that it would be unreasonable excessive and inappropriate not be allowed to continue in my program. Please allow me to implement/continue to implement the strategies that I have so that I may be enabled to continue to achieve my full academic potential at RMIT and complete my program by ***(insert your expected completion date)***.

Thank you for considering my Exclusion Against Appeal.

Your sincerely,

XXXX

Example of an Appeal Against Exclusion Letter

Dear University Appeals Committee Secretariat,

I would like to submit my appeal statement against the decision by the university to exclude me from my program due to unsatisfactory academic progress. As noted by my appeal against exclusion application form, I wish to appeal on the grounds that there is evidence that the penalty of exclusion is unreasonable, excessive or inappropriate (this includes evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances).

The reasons and evidence I have for appealing on the above grounds will be explained in the following letter. I will explain that over the past two years (2012-2014) my studies were heavily impacted and my ability to achieve my full potential was mostly disrupted by multiple external issues.

Firstly during 2012, I as a student was working full time hours due to both my parents' being unemployed at the time. I was a first year just coming out of high school and as result I struggled to get help and was left to support my family and study full time. I responded with my 'show cause' including showing evidence and I was able to continue with my studies.

The following year showed a large improvement in my results at RMIT due to my father beginning work full time and lifting the burden off my shoulders. I was able to focus on my studies and was very pleased in seeing my first high distinction and several distinctions throughout the year.

Semester 1, 2014 began with myself having high hopes to overcome what challenges I would face during the semester. As stated in my show cause, I was warned by previous students that the core subjects during the semester are going to be difficult, with that said I took their advice and completed two electives over the summer and dropped my workload to focus on what was ahead. Towards the end of semester, my maternal grandmother who was very sick passed away. This passing devastated my family as my grandmother was the last living grandparent to my brother, sister and I.

Prior to her passing, my mother had a hunch that her time was coming to an end and began becoming very stressed and was in a constant negative mood. She would rarely smile and speak only when spoken to. Seeing my mother like this was by far one of the hardest things I've come across in my entire life, she began staying home more often until it was as if she would never step foot outside, and meant that she needed to be looked after and watched around the clock. It meant that aside from my mind rarely being completely on my assignments and my coursework, I did not attend classes as often as I should have because of the circumstances at home. My brother and father both work full time while my sister is in high school which really left me to look after my mum on most days.

I couldn't study at home because my mum required my attention, but I also couldn't study away from home and leave my mum alone. This is the reason my studies didn't go as planned during last semester and as a result of these circumstances I wish to be allowed another chance to continue my studies.

I did not 'show cause' the certificate of my grandmother attached to this letter at the time as I was unaware of its existence. It wasn't until I explained my exclusion to my father that he gave it to me and urged me to use it as evidence after speaking to my mother. I also thought that it was

unnecessary as it is a very sensitive topic for me to speak about and if I had any chance of avoiding the need to bring it up in my show cause, I would. So as a result of that, my original show cause has no information regarding my grandmothers passing.

During this semester, my mum is gradually recovering. She can leave the house and go unsupervised for long periods of time, the fear I have of my mum doing something that may harm herself is gone although I do still keep watch every now and then. I am able to attend classes regularly and have already seen my results going back up to how they were in 2013 when I had no external factors affecting my studies. I have familiarised myself with all student support services for my course and have utilised them every time I required assistance. I have yet to fail a single assignment and am actually enjoying my time at RMIT once again.

As explained, given these factors and challenges I have faced outside of my study, I believe that to exclude me from my program is unreasonable and excessive given the statements and evidence brought forth that is the reason for my poor performance. I am now almost entirely problem free and am left with just my studies for one final year at RMIT I have implemented solutions and developed long terms plans to ensure that I will complete my program next year while reaching my full potential.

Yours sincerely,

XXXX

Example of an Appeal Against Exclusion letter

Dear University Appeals Committee Secretariat,

I wish to submit the follow statement to appeal against the decision to be excluded from my program due to unsatisfactory progress. As indicated by my Appeal Against Exclusion Application Form attached to this letter, I am appealing on the ground of:

- Exclusion is excessive, unreasonable and inappropriate

The reason and evidence I have for appealing on the above ground are laid out in the following letter. I will illustrate that over the past 1 year my ability to achieve my full potential and be successful in my study was disrupted by multiple factors that have influenced my ability to study effectively.

My English was not good enough to understand the deep meanings of the subject, which I am taking. Initially this meant I struggled to understand the more difficult parts of my courses. Especially subjects with lots of specialist terms which I had to learn. I was not prepared for this big change in my study and I did not spend enough time before first semester going through my course guides to plan my learning to make sure I stayed on top of the English language requirements of my courses. I was so overcome by this that I did not engage with support services that RMIT has to offer such as SLAMS and the Study and Learning centre. Had I felt able to access these services earlier last year I believe it would have made a big difference to my ability to manage the English language requirements of my courses and helped to develop my understanding of subject matter in English.

After my first semester of poor performance at RMIT I was upset and depressed. I lost my motivation and it felt difficult to keep studying when I felt like I would never be good enough. This was made worse by the constant pain I suffered due to an ongoing issue with my spine. I have a curve in my spine. This means I often suffer from back pain which is very hard to cope with. I can't predict when the back pain will start and when I have pain it is difficult for me to focus on my studies and concentrate on learning. The only way to decrease the pain was to take pain killers (which would lessen the pain but not remove it) and lie down on my back. It would normally take 2-3 days for me to recover from this pain. During this time constant pain killer use would make me feel tired and sleepy.

I was unwell with my back pain for a lot of time in Melbourne but I was scared that it would cost me a lot of money to get treatment. I have Overseas Student Health Cover but it does not include x-rays and MRIs, medication, physiotherapy – not all surgeries are covered. I therefore waited until I went home over Christmas to speak to my family doctor about my back. This is why I did not include this information in my show cause submission. I could not afford to go to the doctor so I did not know exactly what was wrong with me and I therefore did not have any evidence to support the fact that I was suffering from back pain. When I went home I was told that I had a curve in my spine and that medication should help to improve the strength of my spine and lessen the pain I was experiencing.

I believe that this constitutes a compassionate and compelling reason why exclusion would be excessive, unreasonable and inappropriate.

Since I have returned to RMIT the pills have been working and I feel a lot less pain. When my back gets painful I do not need to take lots and lots of pain killers and I find it easier to concentrate on my work because my pain is less.

The more I have studied at RMIT the better my English has become and I now find it easier to accommodate complex terminology in my work. I will be going to SLAMs to get the support of my peers to make sure I have a full knowledge of the course content and when there is English that I do not understand I will go to the Study and Learning Centre for help. I also want to take my assignments to the Study and Learning Centre before I submit them to make sure that I am using good English grammar and spelling when I complete my work. I have also signed up to the English Language Workshops at the student union. I want to be able to make the most of the services RMIT offers students to help with their studies.

I have developed a study plan to make sure that I can fit in all of this extra study and complete my coursework. I am ready and organised for this semester. I have two tests coming up in the next few weeks. I am already prepared for these tests, I know I understand the content well and I believe I will get good marks.

My parents run an import/export business in Vietnam. While I was at home over the summer break I helped them a lot with their paperwork to gain experience working in a business. I think this will help a lot as it gives me a practical way of using my studies.

I had a long time to think what was happening and I know that I want to continue this subject and I believe that I can do it well. I really enjoy studying Accounting at RMIT and now my back pain is manageable and I have a process in place to make sure I can manage my studies and my English this semester I believe that I can successfully complete this program.

As illustrated above I believe that it is unreasonable and excessive to be excluded from my program and that the circumstances that led to my poor performance academically were severe and I have implemented solutions so that I can now continue to achieve my full academic potential at RMIT.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

XXXX

Study Plans – and how to write one!

As part of your Appeal Against Exclusion submission you can include a detailed study plan. The University wants to know that you are able to complete your program of study and that you have a plan in place to help you succeed in the future. In your submission you might write about how you are planning on organising your work and staying on top of your studies at RMIT.

Below is an example of what a weekly study timetable might look like. **Importantly you need to include your courses and the hours per day that will go towards your study, which will be personal and depend on the degree you are studying, the number of courses you are enrolled in and the time it takes to review each week's material.** If you are between semesters and you don't yet know what classes you will be enrolled in just name them lecture 1, tutorial 1, lecture 2, tutorial 2, etc. Remember that RMIT expects that most bachelor students will be putting around 10-12 hours of study **per course** – your study timetable should reflect this. If you are part of a study group/you go to SLAMS/are doing a study workshop, you can include this. You can also include any sporting or other activities you do during the week. If you are responsible for caring for family, visiting family or performing a lot of household chores remember to leave time for those too.

Over the next two pages there are two examples of what your study timetable might look like. **Remember it is important not to copy and paste these timetables but to develop your own.**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Train to university	Train to university	Gym	Train to university	Gym	
	Lecture/tutorial name	Lecture/tutorial name	Home Study	Lecture/tutorial name	Home Study	Gym
	Lecture/tutorial name	Break/Lunch	Home Study	Lecture/tutorial name	Home Study	Home Study
	Break/lunch	Break/Library-study	External Tutoring	Slams program	Train to University	Home Study
	Lecture/tutorial name		Lunch	Lunch		Home Study
	Break/library-study	Lecture/tutorial name	Family time	Library-Study	Lecture/tutorial name	-Lunch
	Tute	Library-study	Home Study	Library-Study	Break/Lunch	Leisure time
	Slams program	Library-study	Home Study	Train back home	Lecture/tutorial name	Leisure time
	Library-study	Train back home	Leisure time	Home Study	Library-Study	Home Study
	Train back home	Leisure Time	Leisure time	Home Study	Train back home	Home Study
	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner
	Home Study	Home Study	Home Study	Leisure Time		
				Home Study	Leisure Time	Leisure time
	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep		

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8am-9am							
9am-10am	Work at Childcare	Lecture 1		Tutorial 3		Work at Childcare	Spend day at my Mum's
10am-11am		Reading in library	Lecture 2		S+L		

11am-12pm			Lunch	S+L	Reading in Library and lunch			
12pm-1pm		Lunch	Lecture 3	Lunch				
1pm-2pm		Tutorial 1	Tutorial 2	Reading in Library	S+L			
2pm-3pm					Tutorial 4			
3pm-4pm		Travel home	Lecture 4					
4pm-5pm		Food shopping and chores	S+L	Travel home	Travel home			
5pm-6pm	Travel home and prepare food	Prepare food	Spend evening at my Mum's	Night off	Spend Evening at my Mum's	Night off	Finalise assignments and readings for the week and prepare food	
6pm-7pm	Go over readings and lecture notes for the week	Go over lecture notes work on assignments		Night off				Night off
7pm-8pm				Night off				Night off
8pm-9pm				Night off				Night off
9pm-10pm								

This form is to be completed by

Students who have received a 'Notification of intention to exclude you from your program' from the Academic Registrar and who wish to appeal the decision of the school to exclude them from their program for unsatisfactory progress.

Submission requirements

Prior to making this appeal submission you must:

- have received 'Notification of the intention to exclude you from your program' from the Academic Registrar via your student email account
- have a current enrolment or have been granted an approved leave of absence
- lodge this submission to ensure delivery to the University Appeals Committee (UAC) secretariat by the prescribed due date.

Appeal applications which do not meet **all** of the above submission requirements cannot be accepted and will be deemed automatically ineligible for consideration.

What will happen next? Will I be granted a hearing of the University Appeals Committee?

In lodging an appeal you are requesting a hearing of the University Appeals Committee to consider your appeal against the decision of the school to exclude you from your program.

Following receipt of a complete and eligible appeal submission, the Academic Registrar (or nominee) will, within 20 working days, decide whether your application satisfies the ground/s of appeal you have selected on page 2 of this form.

Where the eligibility criteria have been deemed:

- (a) to have been met, a hearing of the University Appeals Committee will be arranged and you will be notified of the date and time accordingly
- (b) not to have been met, your request for a hearing will be denied and we will advise you accordingly. This communication will explain the reasons for the determination and also advise you of your right to seek an external review of the decision.

Communication

Your RMIT student email account and the postal address you provide on this form will be used for correspondence related to your appeal. The postal address you provide may be different from the mail or home address recorded in myRMIT. To update your contact details in myRMIT, log in to my RMIT at www.rmit.edu.au/myrmit and go to the **myDetails** tab.

Further assistance

For advice on the appeal process or how to complete the form contact:

University Appeals Committee Secretariat

Telephone: +61 3 9925 8846/8862/8964

Email: universityappeals@rmit.edu.au

Assessment, Academic Progress and Appeals regulations, Part 4, University Appeals Committee at www.rmit.edu.au/policies.

RMIT Student Union www.su.rmit.edu.au.

To make an appointment with a student rights officer, tel. +61 3 9925 5004 or email student.rights@rmit.edu.au.

We strongly recommend that you read the University regulations, policy and procedures governing academic progress and student appeals. Refer to www.rmit.edu.au/policies/academic and www.rmit.edu.au/students/acadprogress.

Information supplied as part of your appeal submission will be treated in a confidential manner in accordance with the RMIT Privacy policy and the provisions of other relevant state and federal government information handling acts, regulations and statutes. Refer to www.rmit.edu.au/privacy.



Appeal against exclusion – University Appeals Committee

Section A – Personal details

Student no. _____

Title Family name

Given name/s

Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)

Contact no.

Postal address details for the duration of the appeals process.

Number Street

Suburb

State

Country

Post code

If you need to change this address while your appeal is being processed, please contact the University Appeals Committee Secretariat.

Section B – Program details

Program name

Program code

School

College

Are you currently enrolled as an offshore international student?

 Yes

 No

If yes, in which country are you currently undertaking study? _____

Section C – Grounds of appeal

You must:

- indicate the ground/s of your appeal by ticking the appropriate box below (refer to Information sheet – page 1)
- provide a written submission stating your case against the exclusion decision, referring to the ground/s of appeal you have selected below
- attach copies of any supporting documentation that you wish to be considered.

A student may appeal against an exclusion decision to the University Appeals Committee where they can provide evidence that they have met **one or more** of the following grounds (please tick):

 There is evidence that the decision was made on the basis of personal bias or ill will.

 There is significant new, relevant evidence that was not available at the time the student was required to 'show cause' why they should not be excluded.

 There is evidence of a breach of the Assessment: academic progress (coursework programs) procedure or another relevant University statute or regulation, policy or procedure in the handling of the exclusion process (this includes evidence of a procedural error in the handling of an appeal against assessment or evidence that the school failed to implement the academic progress intervention strategy described in the Assessment policy and its associated procedures).

 There is evidence that the penalty of exclusion is unreasonable, excessive or inappropriate (this includes evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances – see definition below).

Compassionate or compelling circumstances

The following are some examples of what may be considered compassionate or compelling circumstances for the purposes of reviewing a student's 'show cause' and/or appeal applications. Each appeal is assessed against the ground/s for appeal on its individual merits.

Compassionate or compelling circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the student and they have an impact on the student's capacity and/or ability to progress through a program.

These could include:

- serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes
- bereavement due to loss of a close family member such as a parent or grandparent (where possible a death certificate should be provided)
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on studies
- a traumatic experience which could include but is not limited to:
 - involvement in or witnessing of a serious accident or
 - a serious crime committed against the student or
 - the student has been a witness to a serious crime, and this has impacted on the student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologist's reports).

Section D – Statement

Please provide the details of your case including the grounds for your appeal. If you need more space, please attach additional page/s and write 'see attached' in this section. The information and evidence you provide will be used by the Academic Registrar (or nominee) to determine whether you will be granted a hearing of the University Appeals Committee to consider your appeal against exclusion.

Section E – Supporting documentation/evidence

You are required to establish a case against the decision and to provide documentary evidence to support the grounds of appeal you have selected. All timely appeals will be considered fully complete upon submission. If you need to support a timely appeal with further evidence which **cannot** be provided within the appeal submission period, you must immediately contact the UAC secretariat for advice.

If you wish to support your appeal with evidence that is in a language other than English, you must provide an English translation by a NAATI-accredited translator.

Section F – Student declaration

I declare that the information provided in this application is accurate. I have read and I understand the information about the appeals process on this form and confirm that:

1. I am currently enrolled or I have been granted an approved leave of absence.
2. I have received via student email a 'Notification of intention to exclude you from your program' from the Academic Registrar and my appeal submission is lodged to ensure delivery within 20 working days from the date of the exclusion advice.
3. I have selected the grounds of appeal (see Section C) and addressed these, providing evidence where applicable.
4. This appeal submission is complete unless I have obtained approval from the UAC Secretariat to lodge evidence outside the appeal submission period.
5. I understand that if I do not meet the eligibility criteria my appeal submission will not proceed to a hearing of the University Appeals Committee.

Office use only
University Appeals Committee
stamp

Student signature _____

Date (dd/mm/yy) _____

Submission

You are required to complete Sections A to F and submit pages 2 and 3 of this form, together with any supporting documentation. **You must ensure that your appeal is submitted to ensure delivery within 20 working days from the date the notice of exclusion was sent by the Academic Registrar.** Late appeal applications cannot be accepted.

Address your appeal to: The Secretary – University Appeals Committee
Academic Registrar's Group, RMIT University

Submit your appeal:

- by email to universityappeals@rmit.edu.au
- by hand delivery to Building 88, Level 8, 440 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne 3000
- by facsimile on +61 3 9925 8855
- by mail to The Secretary
University Appeals Committee
Academic Registrar's Group
RMIT Melbourne
GPO Box 2476
Melbourne Vic 3001

Show Cause & Exclusion

Show Cause

Have you been asked to 'Show Cause' to your School? Please read! This is important information.

What does this mean?

Students are asked to Show Cause after they have two unsatisfactory semesters in their program. A semester is usually considered unsatisfactory because half or more courses (subjects) were failed, or because a course was failed for a 2nd time (failing a placement course also makes a semester unsatisfactory).

What do you need to do now?

Your School will send you an email asking you to explain why they should not exclude* you from your program. It is in your best interest to respond to this invitation and explain your circumstances. These emails are sent to students at the end of Semesters, when classes have stopped. Even between semester, KEEP CHECKING YOUR STUDENT EMAIL ACCOUNT, you don't want to miss this opportunity to explain your circumstances.

If you do not respond to this email request from your School, in the time-frame given to you, your School will recommend your exclusion from your program.

What does 'exclusion' mean?

Exclusion means that your enrolment in your program is cancelled, you cannot study in your program for 12 months and you must reapply the following year to get back in- there is no guarantee that your school will accept you back into your program.

What is a 'Show Cause' letter and why do you need to write one?

You need to write a letter to your school which explains why you failed courses. There could be many reasons why you did not do well, or one particular reason. It is really important that you provide evidence with your story.

What happens if you don't respond to your School's email inviting you to make a timely 'Show Cause' submission?

As mentioned above, your school will refer the matter to another area of RMIT (the Academic Registrar's Group), recommending your exclusion.

You will now be expected to write a more thorough and stronger case, outlining specific appeal grounds, for why you should not be excluded from your program and, if RMIT is willing to consider your new application, you will need to sit in a University hearing and present your case to a panel.

You don't need to go through this alone

Exclusion

You will have received notification from RMIT's Academic Registrar's Office that you are being recommended for exclusion. You have TWENTY (20) WORKING DAYS to lodge appeal applications to the University Appeals Committee (UAC) after receiving the Exclusion letter. You are advised to contact a Student Rights Officer at the Student Union to assist you with this process.

1. Writing the appeal letter

Your letter should explain how your situation fits within one of the following grounds of appeal:

- There is evidence that the decision was made on the basis of personal bias or ill will; and/or
- There is evidence of a breach of this procedure or another relevant university statute, regulation, policy or procedure in the handling of the exclusion process (this includes evidence of procedural error in the handling of an appeal against assessment or evidence that the school failed to implement the academic progress intervention strategy); and/or
- There is evidence that the penalty of exclusion is unreasonable, excessive or inappropriate (this includes evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances);
- There is significant new, relevant evidence that was not available at the time the student was required to show cause why they should not be excluded.

You may appeal under more than one of the grounds.

2. Attach supporting documents

Lodge your appeal application, appeal letter and all supporting documentation with the Secretary of the University Appeals Committee. It is advisable to meet with a Student Rights Officer at the Student Union before handing in your appeal submission. They will be able to look it over and give you some advice.

Further advice on writing your application can be found at www.rmit.edu.au/help

Then what?

Initial review

The Academic Registrar will review the appeal submission to see if it addresses one or more of the grounds of appeal mentioned above. If your submission is found not to have addressed the grounds, you will be notified and the Academic Registrar (or nominee) will arrange the cancellation of your enrolment.

Where your submission is found to have addressed the grounds, you will be invited to a University Appeals Committee hearing.

Remember to check your student email regularly as RMIT will use your student email to notify you. **CONTINUES PAGE 2** ▶

► Preparing for your university appeal hearing

The Committee must give you at least five (5) working days notice of the venue, date and time of your hearing. Tell a Student Rights Officer as soon as you have these details.

Prepare a statement of how you will present your case. When preparing, keep in mind that the University Appeals Committee need to be convinced by you that you will be able to succeed in your studies if they uphold your appeal. Be prepared for questions about your study habits, workload outside of university, and number of hours you spend studying. It is highly advisable that you go to your own hearing and are not on holidays on the date of your appeal.

You have the right to be represented by another person such as a Student Rights Officer. You can also take witnesses or an interpreter if necessary. It is highly advisable that you seek the Student Union's support.

The role of the Student Rights Officer is to support you and empower you to win your own case. They can assist you to present your case if you do not feel confident or if there are breaches of policy that require complex interpretation.

Discussion about your case and decision making will happen 'in camera' meaning that you and the School representative won't be in the room when the Committee makes its decision about your appeal. If your appeal is unsuccessful, you can appeal to the Victorian Ombudsman.

If the University Appeals Committee dismisses your appeal against exclusion, the Secretary of the University Appeals Committee will inform you that you have 10 working days in which to seek a review of its decision externally by the Ombudsman of Victoria, (where Ombuds of Victoria jurisdiction applies).

If you do seek a review by the Ombuds, you must provide evidence to the Academic Registrar of your lodgement of the application within 10 working days if you wish to continue to be enrolled whilst that review is being conducted.

If no valid notice of application for review by the Ombuds of Victoria is lodged with the Academic Registrar at the expiry of 10 working days after the date the University Appeals Committee decision has been sent, the Academic Registrar will cancel your enrolment (and if you are an international student, will advise the Director, International Services to report you to the Department of immigration and citizenship as required by the ESOS Act and National Code).

Other relevant information

Re-enrolment

You must enrol for the next year if you intend to appeal against the exclusion recommendation. You have a right to re-enrol whilst waiting for your appeal outcome. If you do have problems on re-enrolment day, contact a Student Rights Officer, your Program Coordinator or Head of School immediately. If you do not re-enrol you may lose your place regardless of the outcome of your appeal.

Appealing your results

Did you fail any subject you believe you should have passed? You may be recommended for exclusion because you failed half or more of your course load, or you failed a subject for the second time. As well as appealing against a recommendation to exclude you, it might be possible to appeal against assessment results. If this is the case, you should first appeal to the College Appeal Committee. You have 20 working days after the official release of results in order to do this. For more information, see www.rusu.rmit.edu.au/appealsagainstassessment

What happens if I am excluded?

If you are excluded from a particular Program, you can apply for admission to other Programs at RMIT or the same program elsewhere.

You are only excluded from your Program for 12 months.

After 12 months you are not automatically readmitted. During your 'excluded' year you should make an appointment with your Head of Department (around August) to discuss readmission. They normally have the final say, but a Student Rights Officer may be able to assist you in this process.

International students

As we said above it is a condition of student visas that you maintain satisfactory progress so if you are excluded, the Department of Immigration will take this as proof that you have not met a visa condition. This can lead to the cancellation of your visa. We strongly recommend that if exclusion gets to the stage of being reported to the Department of Immigration, you seek expert advice from a migration agent and contact RMIT International. In many cases things do not have to get to this stage, and there are many excellent strategies available for resolving your problems within RMIT.

If you are an international student:

- Lodge an appeal so that you have a chance to resolve your problems within RMIT and
- Make sure that you see a Student Rights Officer for expert help and advice about your case and for appropriate referral where necessary

Vocational Education (TAFE) students

Due to changes in RMIT policy in 2007, there are now certain criteria that relate specifically to the exclusion of Vocational Education (TAFE) students. Vocational Education (TAFE) students are required to 'show cause', it is not mandatory that they be excluded; special circumstances may be taken into account. It is expected that the Program Assessment Board will exercise academic judgment, taking account of the student's overall performance in the program and any other relevant issues or special circumstances.

Students enrolled in Australian apprenticeships and traineeships The final stage does not apply to apprentices and trainees, who cannot be excluded for unsatisfactory progress during the period of their training contract. These students must be managed in accordance with the Skills Victoria Vocational Education (TAFE) Program Delivery Guidelines.

Useful notes

Before you see a Student Union Student Rights Officer, please do as much work on your appeal as possible as they have limited time available.

- If you have an ongoing or long-term illness, you may wish to apply for an Equitable Assessment Arrangement. You can get an application form from www.rmit.edu.au/students/forms. The form should be submitted at least 4 weeks prior to your assessment.
- RMIT Counselling Service is free for RMIT students. You may contact them on 9925 4365 between 9 and 5pm Mon to Fri. Their website is: www.rmit.edu.au/counselling

Relevant policies and procedures

Assessment: Academic progress

Coursework programs procedure