

# Preparing an Academic/Learning Plan

## WHAT IS AN ACADEMIC/LEARNING PLAN?

It is a set of well-defined, realistic goals encompassing three key areas:

- A. The focus of your studies
- B. Your expectations or intentions with respect to your workload
- C. Strategies for success

## WHY MIGHT YOU NEED AN ACADEMIC PLAN?

An academic/learning plan is a tool you will use to:

1. **EVALUATE** your academic pathway and identify goals and strategies to help support a plan for your success
2. **PREPARE** for a successful continuation of studies after:
  - i) a challenging year or ii) probation or iii) a requirement to withdraw
3. **DEMONSTRATE** your improved position when appealing to the Associate Dean (Academic) to have a requirement to withdraw waived, or when applying for readmission

## YOUR PLAN SHOULD:

- A) outline essential components from the table below
- B) provide key details relevant to your situation or circumstances (see page 2 & 3)

COMPONENTS OF THE PLAN	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
<p><b>A. Academic Plan</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Is your current academic plan the right academic path for you?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What courses have you done well in or experienced success?</li> <li>2. What courses were more challenging for you?</li> <li>3. Does your current academic plan correctly match your career goals?</li> </ol> <p><b>Resources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider speaking with an <a href="#">Academic Advisor</a></li> <li>• Access resources and advising through <a href="#">Career Services</a></li> <li>• Request an <a href="#">Academic Plan Change</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>B. Workload considerations</b></p> <p><b>*ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:</b> If you plan to reduce your course load, please refer to page 3 in this document.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you have incomplete work to finish up from previous academic sessions?</li> <li>2. Do you have to work while attending school?</li> <li>3. Do you need to take a lighter load*?</li> </ol> <p><u>Note:</u> Full-time = 9.0 units per term (approximately 15-20 hours of classes per week PLUS 20+ hours for course work and/or studying).</p>

### C. Strategies for Success

1. What challenges have you encountered and how will you address those in the future?
2. What skills do you need to build moving forward?
3. What kind of support or resources do you plan to employ?

## A GUIDE TO CREATING YOUR ACADEMIC PLAN

Identify Your Area of Concern	Resources, Remedies, and Next Steps
<b>Academic Demands</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Did you have difficulty with the course content?</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Did you find it hard to follow along in lectures/tutorials/workshops or group work, understand the required readings, or complete course work?</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Did you experience excessive exam anxiety?</li></ul>	<b>If yes, consider:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• seeking advice from your <a href="#">course professor and/or Teaching Assistants</a> and attending office hours on a regular basis</li><li>• retaking courses, especially prerequisite courses</li><li>• requesting a mentor through the <a href="#">Peer Mentor Program</a> or a tutor through <a href="#">Private Tutoring</a></li><li>• joining a study group</li><li>• taking a lighter course load (see *Additional Information on page 3)</li><li>• contacting the <a href="#">Student Accessibility Services (QSAS)</a> to see if you are eligible for academic accommodations</li></ul>
<b>Academic Interests/Level of Engagement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Did you find most or all your course work extremely onerous, to the extent that working on your studies was less fulfilling/interesting than you had anticipated?</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Did you find it difficult to remain motivated and engaged with your program?</li></ul>	<b>If yes, consider:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• seeking advice from an <a href="#">academic advisor in Student Services</a> to discuss alternative Plan options or connecting with the <a href="#">Undergraduate Program Assistant</a> in your department</li><li>• switching to a Plan more suited to your academic background and strengths</li><li>• booking a <a href="#">Career Counseling Appointment</a> to explore pathways</li></ul>
<b>Academic Skills &amp; Work Habits</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Did you find it hard to manage your time, prepare for exams, present material, or complete written assignments?</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Did you tend to miss classes, avoid your readings, or fall behind on your coursework?</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Did you find it difficult to balance your academic and nonacademic activities?</li></ul>	<b>If yes, consider:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• consulting with a learning strategist in <a href="#">Student Academic Success Services</a>, an advisor in <a href="#">Engineering Student Services</a>, or a mentor through the <a href="#">Peer Mentor Program</a></li><li>• trying some online resources like the <a href="#">Study skills and habits questionnaire</a> to identify which <a href="#">academic skills</a> could help boost your performance</li><li>• taking an <a href="#">on-campus workshop</a> to learn how to improve your exam prep, writing skills, or study habits</li><li>• reflecting on your <a href="#">time-management</a> and evaluating your work, school, and/or extra-curricular load</li></ul>

### Personal Circumstances and/or Mental Health Challenges

- Have you experienced extraordinary situational demands that prevented you from succeeding?

**If an unforeseen life event or situation (such as the death of someone close, an accident, a legal battle, family emergencies, etc.) has impaired your ability to perform your academic responsibilities you should:**

- visit the [Absences and Academic Accommodations](#) resource page to determine what kinds of consideration you might qualify for and how to submit a request
- be realistic about any long-term effects you may experience from these extenuating circumstances and adjust your academic goals accordingly; an [academic advisor](#) can assist with this.
- Counsellors at [Student Wellness Services](#) or a chaplain in the [Office of Faith and Spiritual Life](#) are available for support.

### Financial Resources

- Do you have the financial resources you need to support yourself at university?
- Do your hours of work impede your ability to manage your academic load?

### Consider:

- consulting Student Awards in the Office of the University Registrar for information about [financial aid](#)
- seeking advice from an advisor at [Student Academic Success Services](#) to effectively balance your job and academic demands
- taking a lighter course load\* (see \*Additional Information on page 3)

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### **\*IMPORTANT RE: REDUCING YOUR COURSE LOAD**

A reduced course load could impact different aspects of your status as a student. Please examine the list below and connect with any departments that may be relevant to your situation:

- 1) Under [Regulation 7](#), students studying a Bachelor of Applied Science must complete their degree within 6 active years or risk being required to withdraw from their program. If you have concerns about this please connect with **Stacy Shane** ([shanes@queensu.ca](mailto:shanes@queensu.ca)).
- 2) If you are receiving financial support (i.e. OSAP, scholarships, bursaries, etc), please connect with Student Awards at [awards@queensu.ca](mailto:awards@queensu.ca).
- 3) If you are living in residence, please connect with Residence Admissions at [reshouse@queensu.ca](mailto:reshouse@queensu.ca).
- 4) If you are a varsity athlete, please connect with your advisor through [Queen's University Athletics and Recreation](#).
- 5) If you are an international student studying on a visa, please connect with [Queen's University International Centre \(QUIC\)](#).
- 6) Other external supports (i.e. supplemental medical coverage through a parent/guardian's work plan, etc.)

### **NOTE: REQUESTING A WAIVER REQUIREMENT TO WITHDRAW**

If you are asking the Associate Dean (Academic) to waive a Requirement to Withdraw, be sure to:

- A) explain how you have (or intend to) overcome any academic, personal, or financial challenges that have prevented you from succeeding  
AND
- B) describe what resources you have accessed to date or what next steps you plan to take

## EVALUATING THE SUCCESS OF YOUR ACADEMIC PLAN

- ✓ Your academic plan is a tool to measure your progress toward meeting your academic goals as well as a guide to ensure your success.
- ✓ As you learn more about yourself and about your areas of interest and strength, you may need to adjust this plan. Re-visit your plan periodically with an advisor or counsellor as a way to stay on track and also to acknowledge your progress.
- ✓ Sometimes, in spite of your best efforts, you may need to assess whether a different educational institution or pathway might be more suitable for you. At times, a break from post-secondary study is needed to allow you to examine your best course of action. If this is something you would like to explore, please reach out to Stacy Shane, Director, Student Services at [shanes@queensu.ca](mailto:shanes@queensu.ca)

If you need additional guidance regarding your academic pathway or what to include in your plan after reviewing this document, contact an academic advisor in [Engineering and Applied Science](#).

Ultimately, everyone at Queen's wants to support you in being successful. A carefully crafted academic plan will help you make good progress towards your goals.