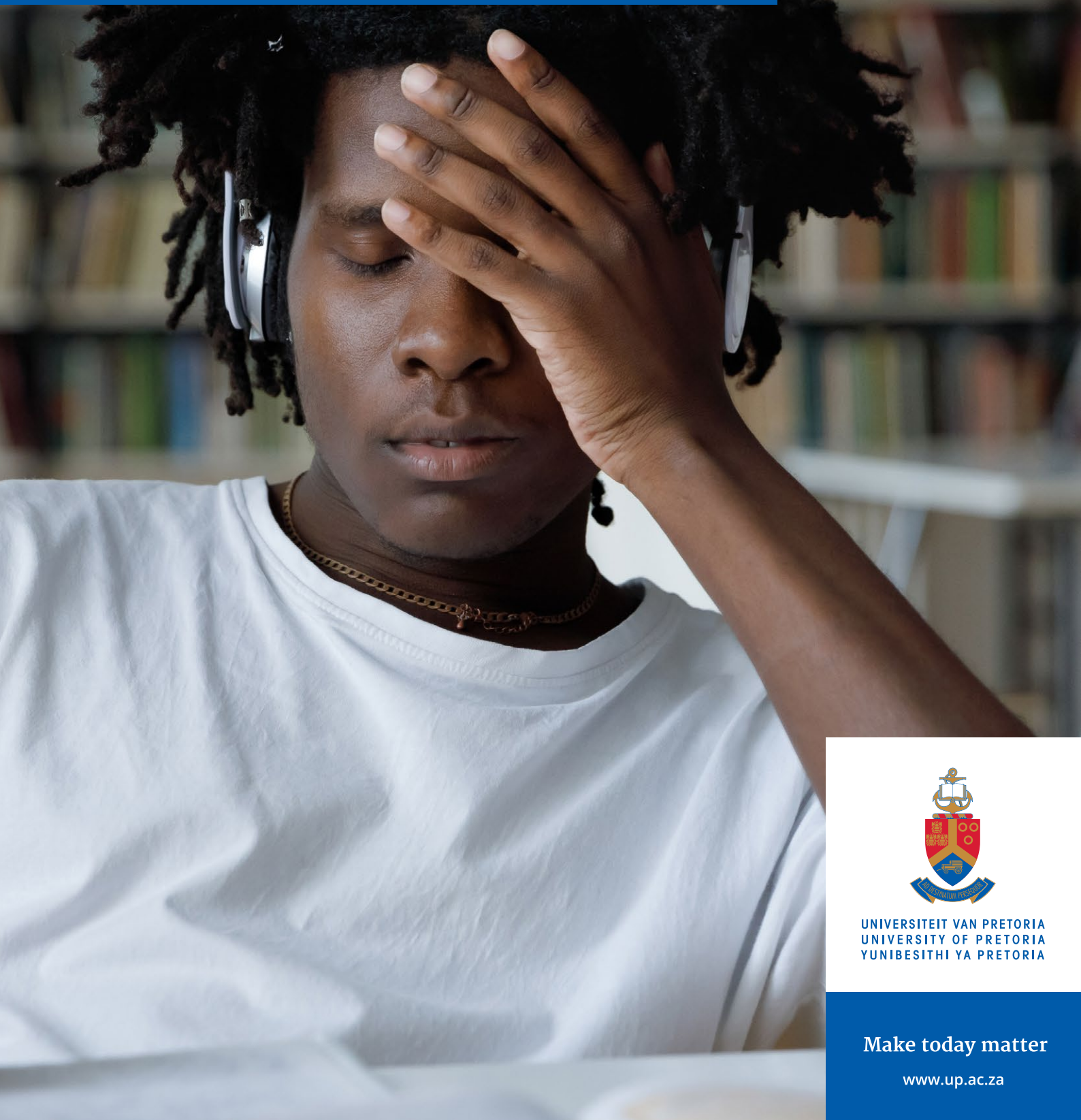


# A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

## on how to handle academic exclusion

*By the University of Pretoria's Department of Student Enrolment and Administration, the Department of Student Affairs, and the Department for Education Innovation*



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Make today matter

[www.up.ac.za](http://www.up.ac.za)



Nobody plans to face academic exclusion. However, if this possibility arises, it's best to be prepared. Here, we offer guidance on how to navigate the process and the steps to take if you are academically excluded.



## What is academic exclusion?

Academic exclusion occurs when you are not allowed to continue your studies as a result of poor academic progress. During registration week, the agreement you sign informs you of certain conditions that are attached to the continuation of your studies; this includes maintaining a satisfactory academic performance and completing your degree in time. The criteria for satisfactory performance and the maximum study period are determined and stipulated by your faculty, and this information is usually available in the yearbook or study guide. In the event of academic exclusion, you will receive a letter at the end of each semester, after examinations have concluded.

## How to prevent exclusion

If you suspect that you are at risk of exclusion, take immediate action. Do not wait until the end of the semester. Acting early may give you a chance to save the semester and avoid exclusion. There are several support structures available to students, but these can only be of help to you if you seek assistance in a timely manner. To access the UP support network, go to

Additionally, it's vital that you check the student portal after writing examinations. Sometimes students go on holiday, assuming that their results were satisfactory. If you have failed, you may still qualify for supplementary exams that can prevent exclusion if you pass. Be sure to verify your results at the end of the exam period.

### Address your academic concerns and risks early by following these steps:

- Check the study guide for your degree and faculty regulations; this can be found on the UP website. Familiarise yourself with the course requirements and exclusion criteria.
- Make an appointment with your faculty student advisor (FSA) to discuss your academic situation. Find their contact information at
- Schedule a meeting with your faculty administrator to understand the implications of failing and to determine if you are at risk of exclusion.
- Consult your FSA or administrator to determine which modules can be safely deregistered, as some may not be eligible for deregistration. Visit for more information.
- Be aware that module deregistration is possible only before a certain date. Deregistering modules too late will result in them reflecting as zero, counting as having been failed and affecting your GPA, which can lead to exclusion.
- Find ways to manage your academic programme, such as seeking help from a tutor, joining a study group, consulting your lecturer or reaching out to your FSA.

- If medical reasons are the cause of your underperformance, seek assistance from a GP or Student Health Services.
- If there is a psychological reason for your underperformance, seek help from the Student Counselling Unit and maintain regular consultations. Email them at [redacted] and fill out the service request form.
- If you fell ill or have a learning disability, approach the Disability Unit (DU) to register a temporary or permanent disability. Contact them at [redacted].
- If you are uncertain about your course, discuss it with your FSA, who can refer you for a career assessment, if necessary, or help you to adjust your career path. Make contact by visiting [redacted].

Remember, acting before receiving the exclusion letter is crucial, because once you have received it, UP's support services cannot reverse the faculty's decision and the exclusion process will proceed.



### What happens when you are excluded?

You will receive a letter from your faculty notifying you of your exclusion. This letter is usually delivered via email or can be found on your student portal under "communications" or as a "hold". It's essential that you check your portal regularly so that you don't miss any important communications or appeal opportunities.

While receiving an exclusion notification may feel devastating, it is important to handle this news with composure, integrity and resilience.

For information about the appeal process, dates and deadlines as well as appeal checklists, visit the UP Appeals page:

Every excluded student has the opportunity to appeal their exclusion, and each student will receive a specific date by which to submit their appeal.



### What is an appeal?

An appeal allows you the opportunity to state why the faculty should reconsider your exclusion. Craft a carefully worded, truthful appeal letter, attaching any relevant documentation that supports the claims made in your appeal. For example, if your health compromised your academic performance, include medical certificates or doctor's letters. If a tragedy occurred in your family, provide the necessary documents.

Your appeal will be considered by your faculty's appeals committee. In the event that the new term begins while you're awaiting the outcome, contact your faculty administrator to ensure that you have permission to attend lectures and access your modules so that you do not fall behind if you are readmitted.

If you receive a letter stating that your appeal has been successful, that means you've been readmitted. Congratulations! Readmission may come with conditions, such as passing a certain percentage of modules or addressing the reasons for your previous failure. If you claimed illness in your appeal, the faculty may expect you to manage your medical condition responsibly before resuming your studies. If you need psychological or academic assistance, be sure to address these aspects.

Access the available support resources without hesitation and keep evidence of your utilisation of them. Develop the resilience to seek support – this is an important skill that you may need to call upon throughout your academic journey.



## Readmission

Ensure that you fulfil all the conditions outlined for readmission and fully understand the academic performance expected of you to avoid future exclusion. Collaborate with your FSA to develop a study plan that will help you succeed at your modules.

### If your appeal was unsuccessful

In this case, you will receive a letter stating that you have not been readmitted. Now, it is important to plan your future studies or career path. Some students take a year off to reassess their chosen field of study before returning to or university. Use this experience as motivation to explore alternative options and approach the next chapter in your life with enthusiasm.

If you believe there is sufficient reason to do so, you have one more opportunity to appeal to the highest authority at the University – the Senate Review Committee on Readmission. Keep in mind that you can only apply to this committee once, and that their review focuses on the faculty's decision. Usually, faculty decisions are considered final.

### The Senate Review Committee

Ask your faculty administrator to escalate your appeal for review by the Senate Review Committee on Readmission. You need to ask your faculty administrator explicitly, as it will not be done automatically. While your appeal is being reviewed, you will still be excluded.

### Final dismissal

If the committee rejects your appeal for review, you will be officially dismissed from the University. It is crucial that you begin planning your future studies or career path immediately.

Explore alternative study options at other universities or consider gaining work experience for a few years before returning to your studies. Utilise the following websites to help you discover new directions:

(offers information on work environments, although courses are not specific to South Africa)

If you mentioned in your appeal that mental health issues contributed to your academic performance, consider reaching out to the Student Counselling Unit, which can connect you with community mental health resources. While the unit cannot facilitate readmission to UP, it can offer one online session to ensure that you receive the necessary help from a service provider.