

# TIP SHEET FOR WRITING A SHOW CAUSE SUBMISSION

---

**This document is to assist you with your Online Show Cause Submission Template.**

## A. DESCRIBE THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT HAVE AFFECTED YOUR STUDIES

### *Provide Reasons for Your Unsatisfactory Academic Performance*

Identify what issues you have experienced and how those issues have affected your ability to academically perform at your best. Note that evidence to back up your circumstances is required where possible (refer to section 5. "Supporting Documents (Evidence)").

#### **Personal**

1. Health (including mental health): you need medical certificates or letters from counsellors/psychologists as evidence.
2. Financial: is there any evidence to support this issue? e.g. Bank statements
3. Family issues, relationship issues: e.g. worried about a sick parent (require evidence – e.g. doctors letter) or relationship ending (counsellor letter).
4. Death in family/close friend: A certified copy of death certificate as evidence may be requested.
5. Victim of crime: A certified copy of Police Report as evidence.
6. Cultural issues: e.g. International students having problems adjusting.
7. Transition problems: Previously in TAFE? International student? Regional student?
8. Language difficulties
9. Work: Do you work as well as study? How many hours? What hours (i.e. – night shifts?). Timesheets/payslips and/or letters from employers should be used as evidence.
10. Living situation: Do you live with other students? Does your home have a good study environment? Have you had accommodation problems?
11. Uni-life balance: Do you have other commitments? Spend too much time on other things? Perhaps you need *more* social interactions to balance out your studies?
12. Did you receive any Special Considerations for these or other circumstances? If so, for what and when? Do you know about Special Consideration?



## Academic

1. Are you in the right course?
2. What is your study routine like? Do you have a problem with time management? Find keeping motivated hard? Do ok in semester but get too stressed out at exams? How many hours per week per unit do you study (outside of class)?
3. What has your participation been (%)? If low, explain why.
4. At Risk: Did you respond to your At Risk letter from last teaching period and seek help?

## Administrative

1. Did you amend your study load? Any problems with your enrolment?
2. Do you find this course too difficult? Do you wish you had reduced your study load?
3. Leave of Absence? Do you need 6 months off to get your life back on track?
4. How long until you complete your program?

## B. DESCRIBE ANYTHING YOU HAVE DONE TO OVERCOME THESE CIRCUMSTANCES

### *List Strategies to Overcome Your Circumstances*

Match these up with the relevant points from section 1, again as relevant to your situation.

\*Note – these strategies are suggestions for circumstances which may or may not be applicable to your own situation. The suggestions may not apply to you, however, are highly recommended. Please check out what support services are available to you:

Swinburne Online Students have access to a range of Student Advisors, Student Coaches and eLearning Advisors (eLAs):

<https://www.swinburneonline.edu.au/support/university-student-support>

Counselling is also available for Swinburne Online students through the Swinburne Website:

<https://www.swinburne.edu.au/current-students/student-services-support/health/counselling/>

Are the circumstances still present and/or affecting your studies? If they are still present, when are they likely to lessen? What strategies do you have in mind/or have already implemented to decrease the impact of these circumstances?



## Personal

1. Health (including mental health): Continue to/or start to receive health support as necessary. Counselling service is free. (The link is above this point)
2. If stress and motivation are problems, look at the Academic Success Program workshops  
<http://www.swinburne.edu.au/stuserv/counselling/group.html>  
For ongoing health issues – do you need to register with Disability Support?  
<http://www.swinburne.edu.au/stuserv/disability/>
3. Financial: Do you have any means of financial support? Have you thought about student loans (for books etc)? Finance support service can help you manage your money. Do you work? Are you eligible for government payments?  
<http://www.swinburne.edu.au/stuserv/finance/>
4. Family issues, Relationship breakdowns: Would counselling be beneficial for you?
5. Death in family/close friend: Would some counselling be beneficial for you?
6. Victim of crime: Would some counselling be beneficial for you?
7. Cultural adjustment issues: Perhaps talk to a Student Coach or look at joining some of the Student Life clubs and societies  
<http://unione.swin.edu.au/clubs/search>
8. Transition problems: Perhaps look at joining some of the Swinburne Student Life clubs and societies. ex-TAFE: Speak to a Student Coach. Would some counselling be beneficial for you? International students: Have you planned a visit home? Or is family visiting you?
9. Language difficulties: Talk to a Student Coach or access Learning and Academic Skills Support  
<https://www.swinburne.edu.au/current-students/study-support/improve-skills/>
10. Work: Can you reduce hours? More than 12 to 15hrs per week is considered too much when studying full time. Can you swap a night shift for an earlier shift? Can you get something in writing from your boss (on letter-headed paper) saying you have been doing X hours and now you are going to do Y hours?
11. Living situation: Is it possible to move to a quieter, more studious house? Otherwise can you come to some arrangement with your current house mates?  
Maybe it would be better to study in the library than at home?  
Accommodation problems? Speak to Housing Support service:  
<http://www.swinburne.edu.au/stuserv/housing/>
12. Uni-life balance: Too much socializing/non-study activity; this can be easy to rectify. Just in acknowledging it, you can state that you have learnt this is not appropriate and will heavily reduce this lifestyle and focus on study. Discuss a study schedule with a student success coach and develop strategies to resist mates and other triggers.  
Not enough social/non-study activity: Perhaps look at joining social groups or clubs your community.
13. Consideration: Explain why you didn't contact your eLearning Advisor apply for Special Consideration (if relevant). Or what the circumstances were around your application i.e. For what subjects, which assignments and why.



## Academic

1. Are you in the right course? Discuss options with a Student Coach or Careers & Employment, lecturers, industry professionals.  
International students - What options do you have to change course?
2. What is your study routine like? Do you have a problem with time management? Find keeping motivated hard? Do ok through semester but get too stressed out at exams? Treat your studies like a full-time job and set up a schedule. Be more consistent with study (location, time etc). Make an appointment with a Student Coach:  
<https://portal.swinburneonline.edu.au/support/contact-us>  
Make your appointment NOW! This will look great in your submission e.g. "I recognise that discussing my time management with a student coach can assist me and I have an appointment for ..."
3. What has your participation rate been (%)? If low participation, what can you do about it?
4. At Risk – did you respond to your At Risk notification from last teaching period (i.e. seek help or reduce study load). If not why not? Provide your reason.

## Administrative

1. Amend your study load. If you had problems with enrolment, seek assistance from a Student Advisor (try to do this as soon as possible, or at least state that you will be doing so). Do 3 units instead of 4. Go part time. Explain how these options will help your studies and performance. Have you thought about changing course? What to? It may be useful to speak with an eLA as part of your strategy.
2. Do you find this course too difficult? Speak to a Student Coach and see what support is available. Have you considered TAFE instead of Higher Education? Have you considered getting a private tutor? Have you considered seeking help from a Student Coach to improve your study habits and get better results?
3. Do you need to take a Leave of Absence? State clearly how this will be of benefit to your situation.  
For some students taking 6 months off study to work or get better from chronic illness is a very smart idea.
4. How long until you complete your program? If you only have a year or a semester to go, then state that you haven't got long and that you have come so far already.



## C. PRIOR PROGRESS REVIEW INTERVIEW OR PROBATION STATUS

### **Probation (this is for 2nd and 3rd time Show Cause students)**

1. Did you meet the conditions set out to by the last Progress Review committee?
2. If not why not? Provide your reason why you did not meet some/any of your probation conditions.

## D. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT MAY ASSIST THE PANEL

### *Concluding Your Submission*

What is your ideal outcome from the show cause process? How does this contribute to your life goals and dreams?

Clearly state your ideal outcome. Be sure to mention that you are passionate about your studies. The last few sentences you write will be your final sell point. Don't go overboard, but be sure to let the committee know that you want to stay in your program. And don't forget to thank the committee for their time.

## E. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (EVIDENCE)

Documents used for evidence must be either ORIGINALS or a CERTIFIED COPY of the original.

How do I get a copy of a document certified?

Make a photocopy of the original document, take the copy and the original to either a Police Station or to a pharmacist (at a Pharmacy/Chemist store) and ask that the photocopy be certified. What they will do is look at the photocopy and compare it to the original, stamp the copy and sign it to certify it as a genuine copy.

What if I can't get the supporting document before my submission is due?

That's ok. Organise for the document to be available as soon as possible. Write in your submission that the document has been requested and will be available on <insert date>. You may need to email the document on the date you indicate in your submission. If the date changes, be sure to let Swinburne Online know.



### **Types of evidence (most common):**

- Doctors Certificates – must be written and signed by your doctor. Doctor's bills are not acceptable as evidence of a health issue. For ongoing chronic illness, a letter from your doctor/specialist is appropriate. It is understood that letters from Specialists can take more than a week to get. This is ok, you just need to mention this in your submission and indicate what date the letter will be available.
- Letters from Counsellor – Swinburne Counsellors can write letters of support for students. Contact the counselling service to make an appointment (preferably with the counsellor you have previously seen) to arrange this:  
<http://www.swinburne.edu.au/stuserv/counselling/SOC.html>. It is free.
- Death Certificates – for family members this is required. It can be a difficult document to get. Organise it as soon as possible and note expected date of availability in your submission.
- Police Reports – the station where you lodge the report will issue you a copy. This is considered certified.
- Bank statements – these may be useful to demonstrate financial hardship. (This claim must be clearly linked with academic performance however)
- Letters from employers – clarify the hours you have been doing &/or will change to.
- Work timesheets – used to demonstrate how many hours at work you have been doing.
- Statutory Declarations – these are written statements that are legally binding. You can get a blank Statutory Declaration form from a post-office, newsagency, online or police station. You are breaking the law if you write anything in a "Stat Dec" that isn't true. Statutory Declarations are good if you only have someone else's or your own word as evidence of an event or circumstance. If you require someone else to write a Stat Dec for you, be sure to organise it as soon as possible. See:  
<https://www.ag.gov.au/Publications/Statutory-declarations/Pages/default.aspx>

**Don't forget to get one of our Advocates to check your submission before you lodge it. This is a free, confidential and independent service supplied by Swinburne Student Life (formerly the SSAA).**

**Contact us on 03 9214 5445 or [advocacy@swin.edu.au](mailto:advocacy@swin.edu.au) to make an appointment, we can also make Skype appointments for those overseas.**

