Legal Profession Admission Board of New South Wales

Diploma in Law

Relaxation of the Progression Rules Facts Sheet

1. What are the Progression Rules?

This factsheet provides guidance on applying for a relaxation of the Progression Rules in the LPAB's Diploma in Law course. It outlines the rules, valid grounds for relaxation, types of requests, and the application process.

The Progression Rules govern the order in which subjects must be taken and the maximum study load per semester. These rules are designed to ensure students build foundational legal knowledge in a logical and cumulative manner, and to maintain consistent academic standards across the cohort.

In summary, the Progression Rules require students to:

- Complete subjects in the prescribed order until at least 11 subjects have been passed or exempted.
- Enrol in no more than two subjects per semester until eight compulsory subjects have been passed or exempted.
- Thereafter, enrol in no more than three subjects per semester for the remainder of the course.

2. Can the Rules be Relaxed?

Yes, but only in special circumstances, and each application is assessed individually under Rule 59(4) of the NSW Admission Board Rules 2015.

Valid reasons for relaxation may include:

- Prior legal study or professional experience relevant to the subject.
- Exceptional academic performance (e.g. average of "Pass with Merit" or higher).
- Personal circumstances that are compelling and well-documented.
- Situations where the proposed change will not negatively affect learning outcomes.

Reasons not accepted include:

- Exam timetable clashes.
- Work or employment commitments.
- Personal preferences or convenience.

3. Types of Relaxation Requests

Out-of-Order Study

Requests to study subjects out of sequence are rarely approved for subjects 01–07. Successful applications typically demonstrate:

- Significant prior study or experience in the relevant area of law.
- Special circumstances that mitigate any negative impact on learning outcomes.

Accelerated Progression

Requests to exceed the standard study load generally require:

- A pass in Subject 04 (Contracts).
- An average grade of Pass with Merit or higher.
- Evidence of capacity to manage the increased workload.

Limits to accelerated progression:

- The 20-subject course cannot be completed in under three calendar years.
- A maximum of one additional subject per semester (on average).
- A maximum of six accelerated subjects over the entire course.

4. Overseas Qualified Lawyers

If you have received the outcome of your academic assessment

If directed to complete fewer than nine subjects, you may take them in any order without submitting a Student Course Application.

If directed to complete fewer than twelve subjects, you may enrol in up to three subjects per semester without submitting a Student Course Application.

To enrol in more than three subjects, you must submit a Student Course Application. Your status as an overseas-trained lawyer will be considered.

Please note that enrolling in more than three subjects is considered more than a full-time workload. Subjects are academically demanding and require significant preparation. While the system may technically permit enrolment in up to five subjects, we strongly advise limiting your enrolment to three subjects to maintain a manageable workload.

If you have NOT received the outcome of your academic assessment

You may only enrol in 01 Foundations of Law and 02 Criminal Law and Procedure in your first semester.

If you have reason to believe that you will be exempted from the above and other subjects you may submit a Student Course Application to request out-of-order study prior to receiving your outcome. Note that your application for assessment of qualifications needs to have been received before submitting the Student Course Application.

Refer to the Uniform Principles for Assessing Qualifications of Overseas Applicants for Admission to the Australian Legal Profession to identify likely required subjects based on the country where you completed your legal qualification.

5. Guidelines for Not Sitting or Failed Subjects

- Students who fail or do not sit a subject are expected to repeat it before progressing, except in the case of elective subjects.
- Applications based solely on a student's failure in a subject and their preference not to re-sit it are unlikely to be approved.
- If approval is granted students must re-enrol in a failed subject within one semester; deferral beyond this period is not permitted.

6. Questions to Address in Your Application

- What subjects do you wish to study out of order or in addition to your current load?
- If your application is rejected, which subjects do you wish to study?
- What is your academic performance to date in the Diploma in Law course?
- Have you previously studied or worked in the area of law relevant to the subject(s)?
- What special circumstances justify your request?
- How will you ensure your learning outcomes are not negatively impacted?

- How will you manage your time and commitments to accommodate the increased workload?

- Have you previously failed or not sat any subjects? If so, how have you addressed this?

7. Important Application Reminders

In your application on STEMS, you must select **all subjects you intend to enrol in for the semester**, not only additional or out-of-sequence subjects. You will only be able to enrol strictly in accordance with the outcome of your application.

Incomplete or incorrect applications may delay enrolment. Ensure all required information and supporting documents are provided. If delays are due to student error or omission, a late enrolment fee may apply.

Fees are non-refundable, regardless of the outcome of the application.

8. How to Apply (via STEMS)

To apply for relaxation of the Progression Rules:

1. Log in to STEMS
2. On the Welcome page, click ‘Student Course Application’.
3. Select the appropriate application type (e.g. accelerated or out-of-order study).
4. Select **ALL** subjects you wish to enrol in the current semester.
    a. Ensure that you do not have exam or lecture clashes
    b. Lecture clashes may be accommodated but must be identified.
    c. Exam clashes cannot be accommodated
5. Address the above questions in the allocated text area.
6. Upload supporting documents (e.g. transcripts, letters, personal statement).
7. Pay the application fee **in STEMS**.