

# SUPA Deceleration Policy & Procedure

## Overview

The Shenandoah University PA Program defines deceleration as the loss of a student from the entering cohort, who remains matriculated in the physician assistant program. Deceleration may result from academic, personal, or professional reasons and is designed to allow students time to remediate identified deficiencies or address other factors impacting their performance. The program ensures that the Deceleration Policy & Procedure is clearly defined, published, and consistently applied in the PA Program Student Handbooks and the SUPA Policy Manual thereby making it readily available to all students and upon admission.

## Purpose

This policy outlines the criteria, procedures, and circumstances under which deceleration may occur, ensuring transparency and consistent application for all individuals while providing students with the support necessary for their successful completion of the program.

## Policy Details

### 1. Deceleration Eligibility and Circumstances

- A student may be considered for deceleration if they:
  - Fail to achieve satisfactory academic standing after remediation or probation.
  - Fail to achieve satisfactory professional conduct issues.
  - Experience significant personal or professional difficulties that impede their ability to progress in the program.
  - Are unable to complete required coursework on schedule due to personal or professional circumstances.

#### Who May Initiate Deceleration:

- A deceleration process may be initiated by the student, the Program Director, or the Promotions & Retention Committee. The final decision to decelerate is made on a case-by-case basis by the Program Director and in consultation with the Promotions & Retention Committee or faculty advisor when appropriate, based on the student's academic or professional performance, likelihood of future success, and individual circumstances.

### 2. Procedures for Deceleration

- Upon identifying a need for deceleration, the Program Director will:
  - Meet with the student to discuss performance issues and potential remediation plans.
  - Recommend deceleration as part of the remediation or retention process, if appropriate.
  - Document all recommendations and decisions related to deceleration in writing.

- Notify the student in writing of the final decision. If deceleration is recommended, the student will receive a plan that includes:
  - A timeline for completion of outstanding courses or rotations
  - Maintaining academic standards
  - Additional remedial work
  - The need to audit or retake courses
  - A timeline for rejoining the program with a subsequent cohort

### 3. Impact on Student Progression

- Deceleration may affect the following:
  - **Graduation Timeline:** Deceleration will delay the student's graduation date due to the time needed to complete remedial work and re-enter the program.
  - **Financial Aid and Tuition:** Students should consult the Financial Aid Office to understand how deceleration may impact their financial aid and tuition responsibilities.

### 4. Consistent Application and Communication

- Deceleration policies will be consistently applied to all students and communicated through:
  - The PA Program Student Handbooks (a cohort specific draft of which is provided to students upon admissions offer) and the SUPA Policy Manual.
  - Meetings with academic advisors and the Program Director when deceleration is recommended or necessary.
  - Written notifications to ensure clarity, transparency and changes regarding deceleration decisions or plans.
- The student's advisor, Director of Clinical or Didactic Education, and/or the Program Director, as applicable, will work closely with the decelerated student to support their reintegration into the program.

### 5. Appeals Process

- If a student disagrees with the deceleration decision, they may submit a written petition to the Dean of the School of Health Professions requesting reconsideration.
- The appeal will follow the process outlined in the PA Program Student Handbook and the Shenandoah University Graduate Catalog, ensuring due process for all students.

### 6. Monitoring and Evaluation of Policy Implementation

- The program will annually review how the deceleration policy is applied to ensure it aligns with stated procedures.