

Deferral, Withdrawal, Suspension and Cancellation Policy

(International Students)

Purpose

This policy provides the guidelines, by which the Institute and enrolled students may defer commencement of a course, temporarily suspend a student's studies, or cancel a student's enrolment in a course.

Responsibility

The Institute's DOS will be responsible for the implementation and maintenance of the policy and to ensure that staff and students are aware of its application and procedures.

Scope

This policy applies to international students enrolled in courses offered by the Institute.

Definitions

- **Deferral:** postponement of the commencement of course by prospective students who have been offered a place in courses offered by the Institute and have not yet commenced studies.
- **Suspension:** temporary postponement of enrolment during a course.
- **Cancellation:** cessation of enrolment in the course.

Policy

Student enrolment can be deferred, suspended, or cancelled in limited circumstances by the Institute or by the student.

Deferral, Suspension, or Cancellation Initiated by the Institute

- 1.1 The Institute may defer the commencement of a course when a course is not offered.
- 1.2 The Institute may suspend a student's enrolment during the course in the following instances:
 - Student misbehaviour, as outlined in the Student Code of Behaviour and Discipline Procedures
- 1.3 The Institute may cancel a student's enrolment in the following instances:
 - Student engages in serious misconduct as outlined in the Student Code of Behaviour and Discipline Procedures.
 - Continued Unsatisfactory Course Progress
 - Non-payment of outstanding fees.

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- 1.4 In cases where suspension or cancellation of the student's enrolment is initiated by the Institute, students will be notified and given 20 working days to access the Institute's internal complaints and appeals process (see Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure). If the appeal is not upheld, or the student withdraws from the appeal process, then the Institute will report the student to DHA. The suspension or cancelling of the student's enrolment cannot take effect until the appeal process is completed unless there are extenuating circumstances relating to the student's welfare. In case of cancellation due to misbehaviour or non-payment of fees, the Institute will proceed with the cancellation of CoE after the internal complaints handling and appeals process has been completed. However, if cancellation is due to unsatisfactory course progress, the Institute will wait until both internal and external processes are completed.
- 1.5 Once the deferral, suspension, or cancellation is processed, the Institute will notify DHA via PRISMS.
- 1.6 When the Institute initiates deferral, suspension, or cancellation of enrolment, students have the right to appeal the decision.
- 1.7 Students must be informed that deferral of commencement, suspension of enrolment, and cancellation of enrolment have to be reported to DHA, which may affect the status of their student visa.

Inactive Withdrawal – Cessation of Studies

- 1.8 If a student is absent from the Institute for two weeks or more for any reason, and/or after failing to return from a deferment, suspension, or holiday period, Student Services will be notified. Student Services will then attempt to contact the student and/or his/her agent and/or guardian (if applicable) to gather information about the student's absence.
- 1.9 If contact has been made and a satisfactory reason for the absence is presented with an expected return date, then no further action will be taken by Student Services.
- 1.10 If no contact has been possible over two weeks since the student's last attendance was reported to Student Services, then the student and his/her agent and/or guardian (if applicable) will be informed by letter sent to their last known address, informing the student that they will be reported through PRISMS as an Active/Inactive Withdrawal for Cessation of Studies.
- 1.11 If the student fails to enrol and/or commence their course within 14 days of the scheduled course commencement date without any notification to the Institute, the Institute deems it as an Inactive Withdrawal from the course by the student.

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The Institute may then initiate cancellation of student enrolment for non-commencement of their course.

- 1.12 The Inactive Withdrawal Policy does not apply to those students who have been granted deferment or suspension of their enrolment for that study period.

Deferral Initiated by the Student

- 1.13 International students may defer commencement of a course in the following circumstances:

- Delay in obtaining a student visa.

- 1.14 Students must request a deferral of the commencement of their course by writing to an Administrator Officer before the course commencing. Deferral can be granted for up to 12 months. Students who defer cannot enrol.

- 1.15 Once the deferral is processed, the student will receive a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) letter and have a new enrolment agreement written to reflect the new commencement.

Suspension or Cancellation Initiated by the Student

- 1.16 International students who wish to suspend or cancel their enrolment during their course must obtain written approval from the Institute.

- 1.17 Students may be granted a temporary deferral, suspension, or cancellation of enrolment during the course on the grounds of compassionate or compelling circumstances. Students must have documentary evidence to support their application. Examples of such grounds may include, but are not limited to:

- serious illness or injury where a medical certificate states that the student is unable to attend classes
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (a death certificate to be supplied where possible)
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel
- or a traumatic experience such as involvement in, or witnessing, a serious accident, and witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, and this has impacted overseas student (evidences should be supported by police or psychologist reports).
- Where the Institute fails to offer a pre-requisite unit, or overseas student failed a pre-requisite unit and hence the student faces a shortage of relevant units for enrolment.
- Overseas student doesn't receive visa on time to begin study.

- 1.18 Student-initiated deferral of commencement or suspension of enrolment cannot be granted retrospectively (after the event), or if it was taken by the student without authorisation, unless there are extenuating circumstances such as the

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need for the student to return home immediately due to sudden death in the family members and it is not possible for the student to obtain a death certificate in time to process the application for suspension of studies.

- 1.19 If students have taken an unauthorised leave of absence they will be recorded as absent and reported to DHA in accordance with the Institute's Satisfactory Course Progress Policy.
- 1.20 Where the deferral, suspension or cancellation is granted and processed, the Institute will notify DHA via PRISMS. The Institute will then inform the overseas student to seek advice from the DHA of the potential impact on their visa.
- 1.21 The Institute will tell overseas students that deferring, suspending or cancelling their CoEs on any grounds through PRISMS may affect their student visa. There could be three situations: (i) Deferring or suspending the enrolment without affecting the end date of CoE: there will be no change to CoE on PRISMS and student status will still be 'studying' (ii) Deferring or suspending the enrolment that will affect the end date of CoE: PRISMS will cancel the original CoE with a more appropriate end date. If the Institute does not know when the student will return, it may not create a new CoE and wait until notified of the intended date of return before creating a new CoE, (iii) permanently cancelling the CoE.

Procedures

Student Request for Course Deferral or Suspension/Cancellation

- 1.22 To obtain approval for a deferral or suspension, students must submit the Suspension of Enrolment Form or Deferment forms or leave of absence forms or together to Student Support Officer before the requested date.
- 1.23 Students must attach all supporting documentation with the application.
- 1.24 Students will be advised to consult with DHA regarding visa implications.

Student Request for Course Cancellation/Withdrawal

- 1.25 Students who seek to withdraw from a course should first seek advice from the Institute.
 - 1.26 Students must request cancellation of enrolment of their course by submitting an Enrolment Cancellation Form to the Student Support Officer.
 - 1.27 Students must attach all supporting documentation.
 - 1.28 Students will be advised of the refund policy and whether they will be financially liable for any fees as a result of withdrawal from a course.
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- 1.29 Students will be advised to contact DHA for visa information prior to cancelling their enrolment.
- 1.30 International students who have been enrolled for less than six months are not permitted to cancel their enrolment to undertake study at another Australian educational institution except in exceptional circumstances as set out in ESOS Act and National Code (refer to Student Transfer to Another Provider Policy).
- 1.31 Once the cancellation request is assessed, the student will be notified of the approval or refusal of the cancellation request.
- 1.32 Once the cancellation is granted and processed, the Institute will notify DHA via PRISMS.

Associated Procedures/ Documents

- Enrolment Suspension Form
- Enrolment Cancellation Form
- Student Code of Behaviour and Discipline Procedures
- Deferment form/Leave of Absence Form