

Enrolment Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Procedures - International Students

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

Purpose

(1) These Procedures support enrolment of international coursework students holding a student visa, in accordance with Standard 9 of the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#) (the National Code). It outlines the process for:

- a. assessing student requests for:
 - i. deferral of commencement; and
 - ii. temporary suspension of enrolment for an approved period of leave;
- b. cancelling a student's enrolment for abandonment of studies or breaching conditions of their enrolment;
- c. managing reviews of decisions, where allowable;
- d. reporting enrolment changes in PRISMS; and
- e. communicating with students about consequential impacts to their student visa due to enrolment changes.

Scope

(2) These Procedures apply to all international coursework students holding a student visa, including students admitted to an English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) Program and to University onshore educational partners.

(3) These Procedures do not apply to:

- a. Suspension of a student's enrolment for misconduct in accordance with the [Rules – Student Academic and Non-Academic Misconduct Rules](#); or
- b. Enrolment variations including deferral, leave of absence or cancellation for Higher Degree Research students in accordance with [Rule 7 – Masters by Thesis Awards](#), [Rule 8 – Professional Doctorate Awards](#), or [Rule 9 – doctor of Philosophy \(PhD\) award](#).

Section 2 - Definitions

(4) For the purpose of these Procedures, the following definitions apply:

- a. Deferment means official permission to delay the commencement of study in a nominated course;
- b. Suspension means an approved temporary leave of absence. This is distinct from the term suspension used in

the [Rules -Student Academic and Non-Academic Misconduct Rules](#).

- c. Cancellation means the student's enrolment has ceased. This may be as a result of the student notifying the University of cessation of studies or initiated by the University.

Section 3 - Preamble

(5) Students are expected to commence their course of study on the date of commencement outlined in their letter of offer and complete their studies without interruption. Where this is not possible, the University makes reasonable provision for students to defer or temporarily suspend their studies in accordance with the [Rules Relating to Awards - Rule 2 - Coursework Awards - General Provisions](#).

(6) Variations to a student's enrolment, including those that change the start or end date of their Confirmation of Enrolment (COE), may have consequential impacts on their student visa.

(7) The University may extend a student's COE in accordance with Part A of the [Course Progress and Completion Within Expected Duration of Study Policy](#).

(8) Students will be provided with advice to contact the [Department of Home Affairs](#) (DOHA) about how a potential change to their enrolment may impact upon their visa in the University's pre-acceptance information, orientation programs and International Student Guides, and reiterated by International Student Advisers when communicating with students seeking to defer or suspend enrolment, when they give notice of such intention; and in communications with the student following any variation to their enrolment or COE.

Section 4 - Procedures

Part A - Deferring Course Commencement

(9) The [Rules Relating to Awards - Rule 2 - Coursework Awards - General Provisions](#) permit a student to defer commencement of course for up to 12 months.

(10) Standard 9 of the [National Code](#) requires that for international student visa holders, deferment of course commencement can only be granted for compassionate or compelling circumstances that have an impact on the student's capacity or ability to commence a course as described in the [Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances for Onshore International Students - Guidelines](#).

(11) A request to defer commencement must be made in writing to the Director, Admissions and include evidence to support the compassionate or compelling circumstances on which the request is based.

(12) Staff will assess requests for compassionate and compelling circumstances in accordance with the [Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances for Onshore International Students - Guidelines](#).

(13) If the status of the COE on the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) is "Studying" and the student has passed their first census date, the student is no longer eligible to seek deferral of commencement and must apply for a Leave of Absence via a temporary suspension of studies in accordance with Part B of these Procedures.

Before Acceptance

(14) International Students who have been issued an offer of admission to a course, but have not yet accepted that

offer (and thus no COE has been raised), may request to defer commencement to a later intake period of up to one year.

(15) A deferment will be approved where the Director, Admissions is satisfied that the student has a genuine intention to commence study, has a compelling or compassionate reason for wishing to defer and is able to provide evidence that supports the grounds that are the basis for the claim.

(16) A written response to the student's request will be provided within 10 working days by the International Admissions team.

(17) Where a request to defer before acceptance is approved, the International Admissions team member who handled the student's application is responsible for advising the student in writing that they have been granted approval to defer to a later study period and issuing a new Letter of Offer.

(18) Where a request to defer before acceptance is refused the applicant will be advised in writing of the reasons for the refusal.

(19) The International Admissions team member who handled the application is also responsible for ensuring all correspondence and other relevant documentation regarding the request to defer commencement is retained on the applicant's file.

After Acceptance

(20) International students who have accepted an offer of enrolment and have been issued a COE may request to defer commencement to a later study period up to the census of their first study period.

(21) A deferment will be approved where the Director, Admissions is satisfied that the student has a compelling or compassionate reason for wishing to defer and is able to provide evidence that supports the grounds that are the basis for the claim.

(22) A written response to the student's request will be provided within 10 working days by the International Admissions team.

(23) Where a request to defer after acceptance is approved the International Admissions team member who handled the student's application is responsible for cancelling the COE in PRISMS and creating a new COE reflecting the deferred start and end dates. The International Admissions team is also responsible for advising the student in writing that they have been granted approval to defer to a later study period and issuing a new Letter of Offer and a new COE. The notice will advise the student to withdraw from any units they may have previously enrolled in during the deferral period.

(24) Where a request to defer after acceptance is refused, the applicant will be advised in writing of the reasons for the refusal.

Part B - Leave of Absence (temporary suspension of study)

(25) The [Rules Relating to Awards – Rule 2 – Coursework Awards – General Provisions](#) provide a Leave of Absence will not normally be granted until a student has completed the requirements for at least one unit.

(26) Standard 9 of the National Code requires that for international student visa holders, a Leave of Absence can only be granted for compassionate or compelling circumstances that have an impact on the student's capacity or ability to study.

(27) A student applying for a Leave of Absence must complete the online application form and include evidence to

support the compassionate or compelling circumstances on which the request is based.

(28) Staff will assess requests for compassionate and compelling circumstances in accordance with the [Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances for Onshore International Students - Guidelines](#).

(29) Wherever possible, students will be supported by the University to manage their compassionate or compelling circumstances in an attempt to avoid a Leave of Absence or reduce the duration of leave, including but not limited to the support detailed in the [Support for Students Policy](#).

(30) A written response to the student's application will be provided within 10 working days by the International Student Support Team.

(31) Where a student's request for leave has been approved, the International Student Support team member who handled the student's application is responsible for advising the student in writing that they have been granted approval for a Leave of Absence. The student will be informed that suspending enrolment may affect their ability to complete their course within the expected duration of the COE. The notice of approval will also advise students to withdraw from any units they may be enrolled in during the period of leave.

(32) Students who return from Leave of Absence should be encouraged to make up missing units where possible or they may be required to apply an extension to their COE, in accordance with the [Course Progress and Completion within Expected Duration of Study Policy](#).

(33) Where an application for Leave of Absence is refused, the applicant will be advised in writing of the reasons for the refusal.

(34) If a student chooses to leave without an approved Leave of Absence, then the COE will be cancelled and the student will be required to re-apply for their course if they wish to return.

(35) Students may apply for a review of the decision to refuse an application for a Leave of Absence within 20 working days of notification of the decision. The application for review should be directed to the Director, Student Support and Success or their delegate. The Decision of the Director, Student Support and Success is final within the University.

(36) Students who are dissatisfied with the outcome of the review process will be advised of their right to access an external review process through the [NSW Ombudsman](#) or [National Student Ombudsman](#).

(37) Leave of Absence or exclusion from class will be counted as absences for the purpose of estimating attendance where that is required e.g. the University's English Language Programs.

(38) Students with approved Leave of Absence will normally be required by DOHA to leave Australia for the period of the Leave of Absence where it exceeds 28 days.

(39) Approved Leave of Absence will be reported in PRISMS. This will not result in a visa cancellation. The University will hold a student's place in a course for the period for which it granted Leave of Absence. If a student's visa expires during the period of leave, the student will be required to apply to DOHA for a new student visa and a successful visa grant cannot be guaranteed.

(40) After returning from Leave of Absence, if the student cannot complete their studies by the end date of their COE, they must apply for a COE extension in accordance with [Course Progress and Completion Within Expected Duration of Study Policy](#).

Part C - Cancellation of Enrolment

Abandonment of studies (student notifies cessation of studies)

(41) A student may initiate the cancellation of their enrolment by withdrawing from their course and units of study via My Enrolment and apply for a refund of any fees owed to them.

(42) Where a student fails to re-enrol in at least one unit by the commencement of a compulsory study period, an International Student Advisor will attempt to contact the student to facilitate enrolment or discuss Leave of Absence options.

(43) Where a student fails to enrol in at least one unit in a compulsory study period or apply for Leave of Absence prior to census date, including after a period of approved Leave of Absence, the University will regard a student as having abandoned their course (refer [Rules Relating to Awards - Rule 2 - Coursework Awards - General Provisions](#)) and thereby will be deemed to have notified the University of their cessation of studies.

(44) The decision to cancel the COE for abandonment is final within the University.

(45) The student's cessation will in due course be reported on PRISMS as 'student notified cessation of studies' and the University is not required to notify the student of the proposal to report or to allow 20 days for an appeal to be lodged.

(46) Students wishing to continue their course may apply for re-admission and be re-assessed according to course entry requirements

(47) Students whose enrolment is cancelled for abandonment will be advised that they may apply for a refund of any fees (Refer [Refunds and Remissions Procedures](#)).

University-initiated enrolment cancellation

(48) The University may cancel an international student visa holder's enrolment in accordance with the relevant Rules or Policy by informing them in writing of the intention and providing options for review, in the following situations:

- a. Non-payment of fees: failure to pay any outstanding fees and charges within the timeframe specified in a sanction notice, in accordance with [Rules - Fees, Charges and Sanctions](#);
- b. Unsatisfactory course progress: failure to maintain satisfactory course progress in accordance with [Course Progress and Completion Within Expected Duration of Study Policy](#) and [English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students \(ELICOS\) Academic Progress Policy](#);
- c. Unsatisfactory course attendance: failure of an ELICOS student to meet course attendance requirements in accordance with [English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students \(ELICOS\) Attendance Policy](#).

(49) Should the University initiate the cancellation of a student's enrolment, it will:

- a. notify the student in writing of its intention; and
- b. if the student is under 18 years of age, apply relevant provisions of the [Welfare Arrangements of International Students Aged Under 18 Policy](#).

(50) Students have the right to apply for review of the decision to cancel their enrolment within 20 working days of notification of the decision. The delegated authority for appeal is:

- a. For non-payment of fees, the Vice President (Students) and Registrar as per [Rules - Fees, Charges and Sanctions](#);
- b. For unsatisfactory course progress, the Associate Dean (Education) of the relevant faculty as per [Rules Relating to Awards - Rule 2 - Coursework Awards - General Provisions](#); and

c. For an ELICOS student:

- i. for unsatisfactory course progress or course attendance, the Dean, SCU College as per [English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students \(ELICOS\) Academic Progress Policy](#); or
- ii. for unsatisfactory course attendance, the Dean, SCU College, as per [English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students \(ELICOS\) Attendance Policy](#).

(51) If extenuating circumstances apply, including medical concerns or the student endangers or threatens to endanger themselves or other students, the 20 working day appeal period may be reduced or extended. A claim of extenuating circumstances needs to be supported by evidence.

(52) Students who are dissatisfied with the outcome of the review process will be advised of their right to access an external review process through either [NSW Ombudsman](#) or [National Student Ombudsman](#).

(53) In the case of cancellation of enrolment due to non-payment of fees, the student's enrolment will be maintained until the internal appeals process is completed even if the student pursues an external appeal. The University will not finalise the COE cancellation status in PRISMS until:

- a. 20 working days has passed after the date of notification of refusal and the student has not requested a review of the determination; or
- b. The request for review has been determined and the student notified of the outcome.

(54) In the case of cancellation of enrolment due to unsatisfactory progress or attendance, the student's enrolment will be maintained until internal and external appeal avenues or applicable time periods are exhausted. In these cases, the University will not finalise the COE cancellation status in PRISMS until:

- a. 20 working days has passed after the date of notification of refusal and the student has not requested an internal review of the determination; or
- b. The internal review has been determined and the student notified of the outcome; and
- c. 20 working days has passed after the date of notification of the internal review outcome and the student has not provided evidence that a request for an external review has been lodged; or
- d. The external review has been determined and the student notified of the outcome.

(55) Where a student does not request a review within the timeframe or the decision stands after all review options are exhausted, the University will report this on PRISMS and cancel the student's COE.

(56) Students whose enrolment is cancelled will be advised that they may apply for a refund of any fees (refer [Refunds and Remissions Procedures](#)).

Part D - Reporting on PRISMS

(57) When a decision is made to defer, temporarily suspend or cancel a student visa holder's enrolment, the relevant campus International Student Adviser is responsible on behalf of the University for ensuring this is reported on PRISMS within the required timeframe and for ensuring that all relevant correspondence and documentation is retained on the student's file.

(58) If the University reports in PRISMS that it is deferring a student's commencement, the original COE will be cancelled and a new COE will be issued with the new start and end dates, and the COE status on PRISMS will be 'approved' until the student commences on the deferred start date.

(59) If the University reports in PRISMS that it is temporarily suspending a student's enrolment for a period of leave within the duration of the existing COE (i.e. the student will return to study before the COE end date), there is no

change to the COE and the COE status on PRISMS will remain 'studying'.

(60) If the University reports in PRISMS that it is temporarily suspending a student's enrolment for a period of leave beyond the duration of the existing COE (i.e. the COE will expire before the student returns to study), the COE will be cancelled and a new COE issued with an adjusted end date to account for the period of leave, however the COE status on PRISMS will remain 'studying'.

(61) If the University determines to cancel the student's enrolment due to abandonment, the student's COE will be cancelled and reported on PRISMS as "student notified cessation of studies" and the COE status will be 'cancelled'.

(62) If the University determines to cancel the student's enrolment due to unsatisfactory progress or non-payment of fees, the student's COE will be cancelled and reported on PRISMS with the appropriate reason (i.e. unsatisfactory progress or non-payment of fees) and the COE the status will be 'cancelled'.

(63) If the student's COE is cancelled, the University will advise the student to contact DOHA for information about any impact to their student visa.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	21st May 2026
Review Date	23rd October 2027
Approval Authority	Vice President (Students) and Registrar
Approval Date	21st May 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Brendon Nelson Vice President (Students) and Registrar
Head of Work Unit	Brendon Nelson Vice President (Students) and Registrar
Enquiries Contact	Jacky Zhang Manager, International Student Support Services <hr/> Student Care and Support