

Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy & Procedure

1. Purpose

This policy and procedure outlines the circumstances under which students (both domestic and international) may have their enrolment with ACBI (the College) deferred, suspended, or cancelled. It ensures consistent and fair handling of these cases and meets regulatory requirements under the National Code 2018 (for international students) and general training standards (RTO Standards 2025).

2. Policy

Domestic and international students may apply to defer the commencement of their studies or temporarily suspend their enrolment. Approval may be granted where compassionate or compelling circumstances exist. These are generally circumstances beyond the student's control that may affect their ability to commence or continue their studies, such as serious illness, bereavement, or major personal trauma.

In the case of international students, the ESOS regulatory framework requires that deferral or suspension is only permitted under compassionate or compelling circumstances, or when the College initiates a suspension or cancellation due to reasons such as non-payment of fees, misconduct, failure to meet academic progress requirements, or breaches of visa conditions.

Compassionate or compelling circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the student and which are likely to have an impact upon the student's course progress or wellbeing and could include, but are not limited to:

- serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student will be unable to attend classes;
- death or illness of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible, a doctor's or death certificate should be provided);
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the international student's home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted, or will impact, on the student's study;
- a traumatic experience which could include:
 - involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or
 - witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, and this has impacted on the student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologist's reports);
- where the College was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit;
- inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa.

If an international student defers or suspends their study on any other grounds, the College must report the student via PRISMS. Once the student has commenced the course, the College will only grant a suspension of study for compassionate and compelling circumstances as above.

The College may suspend or cancel the student's enrolment for the following reasons. If a student:

- is found to have engaged in academic or non-academic misconduct
- failed to pay required fees to undertake or continue their course
- has breached the visa requirements for course progress or attendance requirements

A student may also withdraw from a course and thereby cancel their study for their own reasons.

For international students, all variations to the student's enrolment will be recorded in PRISMS in accordance with the ESOS Act and the National Code 2018.

For domestic students, the enrolment will be updated internally and recorded in the Student Management System (SMS) and reported to the relevant Government agency if applicable.

3. Responsibilities

Academic Team – Assess and process suspension of studies requests for current students and cancellation for unsatisfactory course progress.

Admissions Team - Assess and process deferment requests prior to course commencement and all withdrawal requests

CEO – Approve policy updates and review appeals where appropriate.

Director of Studies – Review appeals relating to cancellation for unsatisfactory course progress.

Fees Team – Manage cancellation for non-payment of fees process.

Student Support – Assist students with location of forms/documentation and manage non-commencement process.

All staff who interact with international students must be aware of and implement this policy

4. Requirements

This policy aligns with the ESOS Act 2000, ESOS Regulations 2001, and Standard 9 of the National Code 2018. The College must:

- Ensure deferment, suspension, or cancellation is only approved based on valid reasons.
- Notify the Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS when enrolment changes occur.
- Maintain records of all decisions for at least two years after the student ceases to be enrolled.
- Provide students with written notice of decisions and allow access to the appeals process.

This policy and procedure is additionally subject to the Standards for RTOs 2025, the Compliance Requirements, the Credential Policy, and DEWR Policy Guidance.

Standard 2.3 (1)

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The provider supports VET students to manage their enrolment and access support and information in relation to study options, personal circumstances, and other considerations relevant to their progress.

5. Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all students enrolled in a registered course of study at the College. It governs the processes for:

- Deferment of commencement of study prior to or at the start of a student's course,
- Suspension of enrolment during an ongoing course due to compassionate and compelling circumstances or as a result of student misbehaviour, and
- Cancellation of enrolment initiated either by the student or by the College.

This policy applies to all staff involved in administering student enrolment variations, including academic, student support, and administrative personnel. It ensures that all actions relating to deferment, suspension, or cancellation of study are managed transparently, fairly, and in accordance with requirements.

6. Procedure

Student-initiated deferment (prior to commencement of studies)

International students may apply to defer their study if they are unable to commence their course on the scheduled commencement date due to a delay in their visa processing or for voluntary suspension of their study if they are unable to attend the course for a specified period of time, due to compassionate or compelling circumstances.

Students may request a deferment by completing the [Deferment Request Form for Commencing Students](#) before the course start date.

The student must provide a written explanation of the reason for deferment and upload relevant supporting documentation (e.g. medical certificate, travel documents).

Once the form has been submitted, the student will receive an outcome from ACBI's Admissions Team within 10 working days.

If approved, the student will receive a revised Letter of Offer and Acceptance Agreement detailing the changes to their enrolment. The student must return a signed copy of their revised Letter of Offer and Acceptance Agreement to finalise their deferment.

For international students, the revised electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) will be issued by ACBI and the student's PRISMS record will be updated with details of the deferment. International students may be required to apply for a new student visa to continue their course.

In cases where an international student is packaging with an ELICOS course, and is required to extend their English studies to meet the ACBI course entry requirements, a fee may be applied in line with

the Schedule of Administrative Fees outlined on page three (3) of the Letter of Offer and Enrolment Acceptance Agreement and ACBI website.

The maximum time allowed for a deferment 6 months. A deferment does not entitle a student to any refunds of fees and costs already paid.

Student-initiated suspension of studies (post-commencement)

Students must complete a [Suspension of Studies Request Form](#) with evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances where they are seeking to temporarily pause their studies after the course commencement date has passed.

The student must provide a written explanation of the reason for suspension of their studies and upload relevant supporting documentation (e.g. medical certificate, travel documents).

Once the form has been submitted, the student will receive an outcome from ACBI's Academic Team within 10 working days.

If approved, the student will receive a revised Letter of Offer and Acceptance Agreement detailing the changes to their enrolment. The student must return a signed copy of their revised Letter of Offer and Acceptance Agreement to finalise their deferment.

For international students, the student's PRISMS record will be updated with details of the suspension. A new CoE will only be issued if the student's course end date is affected.

The maximum time allowed for voluntary suspension of studies 6 months. A suspension does not entitle a student to any refunds of fees and costs already paid.

Cancellation of Enrolment

A student may voluntarily withdraw from a course at any time. In this case the student's enrolment will be cancelled and the following procedure will apply.

Students seeking to withdraw must formally notify ACBI in writing by submitting the [Enrolment Withdrawal Request form](#).

Cancellation of a student's enrolment initiated by ACBI may occur if the student:

- Fails to commence their studies
- Fails to maintain satisfactory academic progress
- Fails to pay their tuition fees
- Breaches the Student Code of Conduct
- Breaches visa conditions (international students only)

For international students, where there is any deferral, suspension, or cancellation action taken, ACBI will:

- inform the overseas student of the need to seek advice from the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) on the potential impact their student visa,

- report the change to the overseas student's enrolment via PRISMS under section 19 of the ESOS Act.

Non-commencement of Studies

In accordance with the ESOS Act and National Code 2018 (Standard 9), ACBI monitors CRICOS students for commencement of studies as per the start date on the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE). If a student fails to commence on the scheduled date without an approved deferment or suspension, the following process is undertaken:

- First Warning is issued via email within 5 working days of the scheduled start date (i.e. Monday of Week 2), requesting immediate contact and clarification of intentions.
- Second Warning is issued 5 working days later (i.e. Monday of Week 3) if no response has been received and the student has still not commenced their studies.
- Final Warning is issued 6 working days later (i.e. Tuesday of Week 4), advising the student's CoE will be cancelled and reported in PRISMS for non-commencement of studies if no response is received within 5 working days. If no response is received, ACBI will proceed with cancellation within the timeframe permitted by PRISMS. All communication is documented, and the student is informed of their right to appeal in accordance with the Complaints and Appeals Policy.

Unsatisfactory Course Progress

Where an overseas student has been assessed as not meeting satisfactory course progress or course attendance requirements, ACBI is obligated under section 19(2) of the ESOS Act to report this to the Department of Home Affairs (DHA). A report to DHA may have implications for the student's visa. Students are advised to seek advice from DHA regarding any impact on their visa status or requirements.

Before reporting, ACBI will issue the student with a written notice of Intention to Report, which:

- notifies the overseas student that ACBI intends to report the overseas student for unsatisfactory course progress and/or attendance,
- outlines the reasons for the intended report, and
- informs the student of their right to access ACBI's internal complaints and appeals process within 20 working days of receiving the notice.

ACBI will only proceed to report the student in PRISMS if one or more of the following conditions apply:

- the student has not accessed the internal complaints and appeals process within the 20-working-day period,
- the student has withdrawn from the internal or external appeals process in writing,
- the internal and, if applicable, external appeals process has been completed, and the decision supports ACBI, or
- the student has chosen not to access the external appeals process (where applicable).

For detailed information on course progress and completion monitoring, students are referred to the ACBI Course Progress and Completion Policy, available on the ACBI [website](#).

Non-payment of Fees

If a student fails to pay their tuition fees or other required charges, the College reserves the right to cancel the student's enrolment and report this in PRISMS under section 19(2) of the ESOS Act. The following procedure applies:

- A reminder notice is issued to students two (2) weeks prior to the fee due date.
- If payment has not been received within five (5) days after the due date, a written First Warning Notice is issued advising the student of the outstanding amount and requesting immediate payment.
- If no payment is received within one (1) week after the due date, the College issues a formal Intention to Report (ITR) to the student in writing. This notice includes:
 - The reason for the intended cancellation (non-payment of fees),
 - The student's right to access the internal complaints and appeals process, and
 - A clear statement that the student has 20 working days to pay the outstanding fees or lodge a formal appeal.
- The student's enrolment will be maintained during the 20 working day appeal period. If the student lodges an internal appeal, their enrolment will continue until the appeal is fully resolved and the student has been notified in writing of the outcome.
- If the internal appeal is unsuccessful, and the student chooses to lodge an external appeal (e.g. via the Overseas Students Ombudsman), and if the matter involves the College's intention to report the student to the Department of Home Affairs, the student's enrolment will be maintained until the outcome of the external appeal is known.
- If the student does not pay the outstanding amount or appeal within 20 working days, or if any appeal is unsuccessful and the matter is finalised, the College may cancel the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) in PRISMS for non-payment of fees. All communications and decisions will be documented in the student's file.

Procedure Summary Table – Student-Initiated Application for Deferment or Suspension of Study

Step	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	System/ Record
1	Student submits completed Application for Deferment or Suspension form, with certified relevant supporting documentation of compassionate or compelling circumstances.	Student	At least 10 working days prior to requested deferment or suspension date	Application form, supporting evidence

2	For deferment only - Admissions Officer reviews the application to confirm details, discuss financial implications, discuss new enrolment details, and assess evidence.	Admissions Team	Within 5 working days of receipt	Internal emails, supporting evidence saved in student file and diary
2A	For suspension only - Academic Officer reviews the application and if needed, arranges meeting to confirm details, discuss financial implications, and assess evidence.	Academic Team	Within 5 working days of receipt	Internal emails, supporting evidence saved in student file and diary
3	Application assessed against policy criteria for compassionate and compelling circumstances.	Academic and Admissions Team	Immediately following review	Decision notes on student file
3A	If approved – written notice of outcome and a new offer letter is issued to student, including period of deferment/suspension and new enrolment details.	Admissions Team	Within 5 working days	Outcome letter, revised offer letter, saved in student file and diary
3B	If not approved – student notified of reason and right to appeal within 20 working days under the Complaints and Appeals Policy.	Academic Team	Within 5 working days	Notification letter, appeal rights
4	Student to return the signed offer letter accepting the new enrolment changes	Student	Within 5 working days of approval	Signed offer letter, saved in student file
5	Period of deferment or suspension entered in PRISMS by PRISMS Reporting Officer: If end date of CoE is affected – PRISMS cancels original CoE and prompts issue of new CoE when return date is known. If end date not affected – PRISMS updated with status 'Studying' unchanged	Admissions Team	Within 5 working days of approval	PRISMS records, CoE register
6	Suspension only – Admissions Officer notifies key staff to update records and adjust training delivery. Creates diary reminder for student's expected	Admissions Team	Immediately following internal system and PRISMS	Internal emails, diary system

	return.		changes	
6A	Suspension only - Student Support will send a Welcome Email to the student closer to the suspension end date.	Student Support Manager	Week prior to suspension end date	Internal emails, diary system
7	Suspension only - If student appeals, enrolment remains active, and PRISMS is not updated until outcome of the appeal.	Academic Team	Within 20 working days from decision	Complaints and Appeals Register
8	All records, including application, supporting documents, outcome letter, and PRISMS actions, are retained in student file.	Academic Team and Admissions Team	Upon case closure	Student file, electronic record system

Procedure Summary Table – Student-Initiated Cancellation of Study (Withdrawal)

Step	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	System/Record
1	Student submits written notification of cancellation using the relevant Withdrawal Request Form (for commencing or current students)	Student	Once decision has been made by the student	Request form, supporting evidence
2	Admissions Manager reviews the request and notes any relevant comments or context, adding the record to the Change of Status Register.	Admissions Manager	Within 3 working days of receipt	Notations on application, Change of Status Register
3	Request and any supporting documentation are filed in the student's record.	Admissions Manager	Immediately following review	Student file
4	Withdrawal fee is invoiced (if applicable) per Schedule of Administrative Fees. Students are advised of right to request a fee waiver if there are compassionate/compelling reasons.	Admissions Manager	Immediately following review	Invoice from RTO Manager
5	Student pays Withdrawal fee or provides evidence to request fee	Admissions Manager	Within 10 working days	Supporting evidence, proof of

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	waiver (if applicable).			payment
6	Admissions team accesses PRISMS and records the cancellation of enrolment.	Admissions Team	Within 5 working days of confirmation	PRISMS cancellation record
7	Admissions Manager ensures the following follow-up actions are completed: Emails Accounts to adjust student financial records (if applicable). Emails relevant staff to update internal systems and student records. Advises student of eligible refund and refund process if there remains any unspent tuition.	Admissions Manager	Immediately following PRISMS update and notification of withdrawal being sent to the student	Email records, SMS updates
8	Student file is finalised and closed, with all cancellation documents securely retained.	Admissions Manager and Academic team	Upon completion of cancellation process	Student file, Change of Status Register

Procedure Summary Table – College-Initiated Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment

Step	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	System/Record
1	Identify non-compliance with academic standards, visa conditions, behaviour, or financial obligations.	Academic Team / Fees Team / Admissions Team	Ongoing	Academic reports, misconduct records, attendance data, Change of Status Register (relevant tab)
2	For unsatisfactory academic progress (per Course Progress Policy), send written notification of intent to report for breach of course progress.	Academic Team / Fees Team / Admissions Team	Within 5 working days of determination	Written notice, student file, Change of Status Register (relevant tab)
3	Notify the student of the intent to suspend or cancel enrolment, including: Reason for action. Advice to contact the Department of Home Affairs. Right to appeal within 20 working days	Academic Team / Fees Team / Admissions Team	Immediately upon issuing notice	Notification letter, file record, Written notice, student file, Change of Status Register (relevant tab)
4	Allow the student 20 working days to access the	Student	Within 20 working days	Complaints and Appeals Register,

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	Complaints and Appeals Procedure and submit a formal appeal.			Written notice, student file, Change of Status Register (relevant tab)
5	Maintain enrolment and permit attendance during any appeal period.	Academic Team / Fees Team / Admissions Team	Until appeal outcome is finalised	SMS record, diary entry, Change of Status Register (relevant tab)
6	If the student does not appeal, or after the internal appeal process is concluded and supports cancellation, finalise the decision.	Academic Team / Fees Team / Admissions Team	Immediately following 20-day period or appeal conclusion	Decision note, file documentation, Change of Status Register (relevant tab)
7	Update PRISMS to reflect change in enrolment status.	Admissions Team	Within 5 working days of final decision	PRISMS report
8	Email Accounts to adjust student's financial records and notify relevant staff of enrolment cancellation.	Admissions Team	Immediately after PRISMS update	Email records, SMS update, Change of Status Register (relevant tab)
9	File all documentation relating to the decision, notices, appeals, and outcomes.	Academic Team / Fees Team / Admissions Team	Upon case closure	Student file, electronic storage, Change of Status Register (relevant tab)

7. Policy Implementation

This policy will be actively implemented and promoted across the College through multiple communication channels to ensure awareness and accessibility for all staff, students, and stakeholders. It will be incorporated into the Student Handbook, published on the College's website, and circulated internally via email and staff meetings. Relevant staff will receive briefing or induction on the policy as part of onboarding or compliance training, and updates will be communicated as part of ongoing policy reviews. This ensures consistent application and understanding across all areas of the College.

Document Control

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1.1	17 July 2025	Sam Hartley	Addition of procedure summary tables	Section 6.