

PP16

Deferring, suspending or cancelling student enrolment policy and procedure

PURPOSE

To provide a documented process for assessing, approving and recording a deferment of the commencement of study or the suspension of study for the overseas student, including keeping documentary evidence on the student's file of the assessment of the application.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff of Southern Cross Education Institute (SCEI) who are involved in the process of Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation of Student's enrolment and all the students of the SCEI.

DEFINITIONS

Cancellation	A permanent interruption to a student's study program which can be initiated by either SCEI or student.
eCoE	electronic Confirmation of Enrolment
Deferral	The postponement of commencement date of the course and is initiated by the student
DHA	Department of Home Affairs
ESOS	Educational Services for Overseas Students
Institute	Southern Cross Education Institute
International student	A person (whether within or outside Australia) who holds a student visa as defined by the ESOS Act, but does not include students of a kind prescribed in the ESOS Regulations
National Code	The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
PRISMS	The Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) is the system used to process information given to the Secretary of DEST by registered providers
SCEI	Southern Cross Education Institute
Student	Active, on-campus student with a current course of enrolment with Southern Cross Education Institute. Includes a person (whether within or outside Australia) who holds a student visa as defined by the ESOS Act, but does not include students of a kind prescribed in the ESOS Regulations
Suspension	A temporary interruption to the study program of the student, and can be initiated by either SCEI or student
The Act	VET Student Loans Act 2016
The Rules	VET Student Loans Rules 2016

POLICY

1. This policy and procedure supports 'Standard 9 – Deferring, suspending or cancelling the student's enrolment' of the 'National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities & Providers of Education & Training to Overseas Students 2018'
2. Have a documented process for assessing, approving and recording a deferment, suspension or cancellation of study
3. Notify the overseas student in writing of the intention to suspend or cancel their enrolment
4. Tell the overseas student to seek advice from the Department of Home Affairs on the potential impact on their visa if enrolment has been deferred, suspended or cancelled
5. Not let a suspension or cancellation take effect until the overseas student has been given a chance to complete an internal appeals process, unless their health or wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, is likely to be at risk.
6. Have a documented procedure for students to withdraw from an approved course, or part of an approved course
7. International students are able to initiate deferral, suspension or cancellation of their studies during their stay in Australia only in certain limited circumstances as described below.
8. Students may also have their enrolment suspended due to misbehaviour which can also be grounds for cancellation of studies.
9. Students have the right to appeal a decision by SCEI to defer, suspend or cancel their studies and SCEI will not notify DHA of a change to the enrolment status until the internal complaints and appeals process is completed.

PROCEDURE

The following procedures will ensure SCEI follows the required process when a student wishes to defer, suspend, or cancel their enrolment with SCEI.

1. **Student Initiated Deferral or Cancellation of Enrolment (Never Commenced)**
 - 1.1. A student wishing to defer or cancel an enrolment (Cancellation applies to an accepted enrolment that never commenced) must do so prior to the commencement of the course or Census Date.
 - 1.1.1. **For State Program Funding and VET Student Loans:** If a student's enrolment is cancelled prior to commencement or Census Date, their State government eligibility is not affected, nor do they incur a loan debt if they have applied for a VET Student Loan.
 - 1.2. A student who wishes to defer or cancel from an approved course or part of an approved course will be advised the procedure to follow when deferring or cancelling from an approved course or part of an approved course.
 - 1.3. A student who wishes to defer or cancel from an approved course or part of an approved course will be advised that there will be no financial, administrative or other potential barriers which may impede their request to defer or cancel.
 - 1.4. Where a student has canceled from an approved course or part of an approved course, SCEI will not enrol the student into another course or part of a course without written permission from the student, which is to be provided after the withdrawal has been completed.
 - 1.5. **All students** must complete a FOR06 Application to Defer, Suspend or Cancel Enrolment form and submit to the Student Welfare Department.
 - 1.6. **Once the form and supporting documents are received,**
 - 1.6.1. Student Welfare Officer will contact students to ensure they understand the reasons that deferment or cancellation may be granted
 - 1.6.2. For an international student the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) will be notified via PRISMS of the decision to defer enrolment as a result of the student's request.
 - 1.6.3. The student will be informed in writing by the Administration Manager once the deferment or cancellation has been approved.
 - 1.6.3.1. Administration Manager will inform **VET Student Loans Students** there is no loan debt or any affect student State Government eligibility if student applies under **State Government Funding**.
 - 1.6.3.2. Students may defer their studies for a maximum period of six months.
 - 1.7. Once the student re-enrols, after the period of deferment, a new training plan will be developed and signed and dated by both the student and a staff member.
 - 1.8. If there is a change in the training package the student is enrolled into and/or the student returns in the new calendar year, the student must complete the enrolment process again with a new training plan.

2. Student Initiated Suspension of Enrolment

- 2.1. SCEI is only able to temporarily suspend the enrolment of a student on the grounds of compassionate or compelling circumstances. These circumstances could include but are not limited to:
 - 2.1.1. Serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was / is unable to attend classes;
 - 2.1.2. Bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (Where possible a death certificate should be provided);
 - 2.1.3. Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the student's studies;
 - 2.1.4. A traumatic experience which could include:
 - 2.1.4.1. involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or
 - 2.1.4.2. witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, and this has impacted on the student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports)
 - 2.1.5. Where SCEI is unable to offer a pre-requisite unit
 - 2.1.6. Inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa.
- 2.2. Students who feel the need to suspend the course will be encouraged to speak to the Welfare Officer.
- 2.3. Students will be required to complete a FOR06 Application to suspend, defer, or withdraw enrolment form with evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances and submit to the Student Administration Department.
- 2.4. Where a suspension of enrolment is granted, SCEI will suspend an enrolment for an agreed period of time - to a maximum of three (3) months. If the suspension is required for longer than three (3) months, the student shall re-apply for enrolment once the initial suspension period has expired and a new training plan will be created.
- 2.5. If an international student's enrolment is suspended for a period of 28 days or longer, the student must return home (unless special circumstances exist), this is in accordance with DHA.
- 2.6. Students are to be informed in writing of the outcome of their FOR06 Application to suspend, defer, or withdraw enrolment form and for international students, the intention to inform DHA of the suspension.
- 2.7. All FOR06 Application to suspend, defer, or withdraw enrolment form documentation for the suspension will be kept in the Student Administration File and in the student file of the Student Management System.
- 2.8. For international students, DHA shall be notified via PRISMS of the decision to suspend enrolment as a result of the student's request.
- 2.9. If a student does not return after the six (6) month period, the enrolment will be cancelled by the Administration Department and for international students they will be notified of SCEI's intention to notify DHA via PRISMS.

3. Student Initiated Withdraw of Enrolment

- 3.1. **For all students:** Students wishing to cancel their enrolment must complete an FOR06 Application to suspend, defer, or withdraw enrolment form and submit to the Student Welfare Department.
- 3.2. **For International Students** who wishing to cancel their enrolment prior to completing six (6) months of study in their principal course must provide a Letter of Offer from an alternative education provider. This is required under Standard 7 of the National Code and further information can be gained from PP10 Transfer of students between provider's policy and procedure.
- 3.3. **For VET Student Loans students** who wants to withdraw from the course or part of the course. Once the student's intention is determined, the Administration Manager will inform the student in writing of the debt they have incurred for any units of study which census dates have passed. The date the student contacts SCEI requesting withdrawal, will be considered as the "date for withdrawal" for the determination of the student's debt.
 - 3.3.1. Where a student wants to enrol in a part of an approved course with SCEI, in such circumstances where the student had earlier withdrawn from a part of the course undertaken with SCEI, the student will be required to meet with relevant staff to ensure they are able to undertake the requirements of the course and complete the required enrolment documentation.
 - 3.3.2. If the reason for withdrawal stated by the student could be considered as special circumstances, the student will be provided with the re-crediting procedure for their consideration.
- 3.4. Once the form is received from the student, SCEI Student Welfare Officer will:
 - 3.4.1. **For all students:** Student Welfare Officer will contact student on the cancellation's reasons and review on the provided supporting documents. Whenever appropriate, the student will be offered any options available to assist them in completing the course.
 - 3.4.2. If the student decides to return to SCEI and continue studying the course, the student must complete the enrolment process again and meet all entry requirements.
 - 3.4.3. **For international students:** Administration Manager will notify DHA via PRISMS of the decision to cancel the enrolment as a result of the international student's request.
 - 3.4.4. **For all students:** Inform the student in writing of the outcome.
 - 3.4.5. **For VET Student Loans students** who wants to withdraw from the course or part of the course. Once the student's intention is determined, the Administration Manager will inform the student in writing of the debt

they have incurred for any units of study which census dates have passed. The date the student contacts SCEI requesting withdrawal, will be considered as the "date for withdrawal" for the determination of the student's debt.

- 3.5. All FOR06 Application to suspend, defer, or withdraw enrolment form documentation for the cancellation of enrolment will be kept in the Student Administration File and in the student file of the Student Management System

4. Provider initiated Deferral of Enrolment

- 4.1. SCEI may defer an enrolment where the course is not being offered at the proposed date, site, or any other reason SCEI deems necessary to cancel the course.

5. Provider initiated Suspension of Enrolment

- 5.1. SCEI has the ability to suspend a student's enrolment on the grounds of misbehaviour. This misbehaviour may include but is not limited to acts of discrimination, sexual harassment, and vilification or bullying as well as acts of cheating or plagiarism. Such acts of misbehaviour will be classified into one of two categories; Academic or Behavioural Misconduct.
- 5.2. Where a student has been identified as Compliance Manager shall be informed by and enact the PP96 Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure or PP99 Student Misconduct Policy and Procedure to arrive at a decision.
- 5.3. Students are able to access the PP11 Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure if they feel that the decision is unfair or they have other grounds to appeal the decision.
- 5.4. If an international student's enrolment is suspended for a period of 28 days or longer, the student must return home (unless special circumstances exist), this is in accordance with DHA.
- 5.5. Where the severity of misconduct is severe, the Compliance Manager may decide to cancel the enrolment.
- 5.6. For information about what constitutes Academic and Behavioural Misconduct, consequences and penalties of misconduct, refer to PP96 Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure, PP99 Student Misconduct Policy and Procedure and PP79 Student Rules Policy.

6. Provider initiated Cancellation of Enrolment

- 6.1. In some cases, where the student's misconduct is severe, SCEI has the right to cancel the enrolment.
- 6.2. Where the Compliance Manager has decided the misconduct is severe enough for cancellation the following must occur:
- 6.2.1. The student must be informed in person (where possible), and in writing of the decision of SCEI to cancel the student's enrolment
- 6.2.2. They must be informed of the fact that they have the right to appeal the decision by accessing the PP11 Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure and completing this appeal within 28 working days of the notification
- 6.2.3. The student will be informed that the cancellation will take final effect once all grievance procedures initiated by the student have been completed
- 6.2.4. Advise the student if there are any fees for the course or part of the course which will not be refunded.
- 6.2.5. **International students** must also be informed that SCEI is obliged to inform DHA via PRISMS after the 28-day period and that they may be at risk of having their Visa cancelled.
- 6.2.6. **Students who have accessed VET Student Loans** and already passed at least one census date, will be provided with 28 days to initiate the grievance procedure prior to the withdrawal being finalised. The communication will also include the debt incurred and any other fees which may or may not be refunded.
- 6.3. Students who did not successfully complete a course with SCEI under a **VET Student Loan**, and who wish to re-enrol with SCEI, will be required to discuss with the Administration Manager the impact of the previous loan, (if applicable) as well as the reason for re-enrolment. When the withdrawal was due to special circumstances, the student may need to provide evidence that those circumstances are either no longer relevant or can be managed.

7. Recording and Reporting Deferrals, Suspension or Cancellation of an Enrolment

- 7.1. All FOR06 Application to suspend, defer, or withdraw enrolment form and outcomes are to be kept in the Student Profile in the Student Management System.
- 7.2. All reports of misconduct, decisions and actions taken in relation to misconduct, and other related documentation must be kept in the Student Profile in the Student Management System.
- 7.3. Any decisions to initiate deferral, suspension or cancellation of an international student's enrolment must be reported to DHA via PRISMS and recorded in the student's file in the Student Management System
- 7.4. Students are to be kept informed of any decisions or outcomes that relate to a deferral, suspension, or cancellation of enrolments.
- 7.5. All students are to be given the opportunity to access the PP11 Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

- 7.6. Students have 20 working days to lodge a Complaint or an Appeal before any action of their enrolment status is finalised.
- 7.7. Where an international student decides to access the PP11 Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure within 20 working days of notification, SCEI must wait until the process has finished before going ahead with the reporting of the student's enrolment changes via PRISMS.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- FOR06 Application to suspend, defer, or withdraw enrolment form
- PP10 Transfer of students between provider's policy and procedure
- PP11 Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- PP79 Student Rules Policy
- PP96 Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure
- PP99 Student Misconduct Policy and Procedure

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)
- Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2001
- National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018: Standard 9
- 2022 Standard VET Funding Contract Skills First Program
- VET Student Loans Act 2016
- VET Student Loans Rules 2016 (section 86 and 87)

RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Administration Manager:
 - is responsible for the implementation of this procedure and to ensure that staff and students are aware of its application and that staff implements its requirements
- Student Welfare Officer:
 - is responsible for meeting with students requesting to or where SCEI has initiated a deferment, suspension or cancellation to ensure the student is fully aware of the process and implications
- Compliance Department:
 - is responsible for ensuring this policy and procedure is adhered to and review its implementation.

Author	Compliance Manager
Approved by	Chief Executive Officer
Effective date	24 August 2015
Reviewed	24 August 2016; 3 January 2017; 12 June 2019; 19 August 2021; December 2021
Version	V5.0; V5.1; V6.0; V6.1; V6.2; V6.3
Review date due	August 2018; January 2019; December 2021; August 2023; December 2023