

Deferment, Suspension & Cancellation Policy

Vocational Skills Australia (VSA) Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy and procedures ensures compliance with National Code 2018:

- Standard 9 - Deferring, suspending, or cancelling the overseas student's enrolment.
- Standard 2 - prior to accepting an overseas student or intending overseas student for enrolment in a course the registered provider make the grounds on which the overseas student's enrolment may be deferred, suspended, or cancelled clear to students; and
- Standard 8 - VSA is required to advise the student to contact Immigration to seek advice on any potential impacts on their visa if enrolment has been deferred, suspended, or cancelled

VSA will only enable learners to defer or temporarily suspend their studies, including granting a leave of absence, during the course through formal agreement in certain limited circumstances.

VSA will ensure that students are informed of their rights, internal and external appeals process.

Definitions

- Deferment refers to delaying enrolment, usually to another term or study period.
- Suspension refers to stopping studying from a course for a week or more while the course is in progress.
- Cancellation refers to cancelling the course.

Communication

Students are informed upfront on the grounds on which their course may be deferred, suspended, or cancelled through:

- Letter of Offer and Course Acceptance Agreement
- International Student Handbook
- Website
- VSA emails

Fees associated with cancellation of course enrolment is contained in the Letter of Offer and Course Acceptance Agreement and International Student Handbook (Fees and Refund Policy and procedure.)

Student to seek advice from immigration (Department of Home Affairs)

Students must seek advice from Immigration (Department of Home Affairs) about the potential impact that deferral, suspension, or cancellation may have on their student visa.

Student procedure

Students can apply for deferment, suspension and cancellation by completing the 'Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation' form. This form is accessible through the Student

Support Officer and is located on the VSA website. Forms must be submitted with supporting evidence by e-mail, reception or directly to Student Support Officer.

Timeframe

Students will be notified in writing of the outcome of their deferment, suspension and cancellation requests within 10 working days.

Student-initiated deferral, suspension and cancellation of their enrolment

Students may apply to defer, suspend or cancel their enrolment due to compassionate or compelling circumstances and any other relevant reason.

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

- serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states the student was unable to attend classes.
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible, a death certificate should be provided);
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the overseas student's studies;
- 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 overseas student (these cases should be where possible supported by police or psychologists' reports)
- where the registered provider was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit, or the overseas student has failed a prerequisite unit and therefore faces a shortage of relevant units for which they are eligible to enroll; or
- inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa.
- Any other reason

Students must complete the 'Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation form' and attach supporting evidence.

A student can request to cancel their enrolment at any time. If a student's enrolment is cancelled, the student should refer to the Fees and Refund Policy and Procedure for information about what fees may be refunded and how to apply for a refund.

Student Support Officer / Admin Officer will:

- a) advise the student of the date of their course cancellation, the requirement to seek advice from Immigration on the potential impact on their visa.
- b) advise VSA administration that the student has been cancelled (student cancellation, fees processed and issuance of Statement of Attainment)
- c) process the cancellation in PRISMS.

Note: Students should refer to the Transfer Policy and Procedure if they want to change to a different CRICOS provider.

Student initiated deferral, suspension or cancellation process	Responsibility
1. Complete the 'Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation' form and attach supporting evidence.	Student
2. Submit by e-mail, reception or directly to the Student Support Officer.	Student
3. Form is received. The following information is assessed when processing suspensions and deferment requests: a. Compassionate and compelling circumstances and the evidence provided b. Impact on the student's duration of study and whether intervention or other support strategies will be required to ensure the student completes the course in the required timeframe or whether an extension of duration is required c. History of student including frequency that the student has previously sought suspension	Student Support Officer / Admin Officer
4. The SSO makes an initial assessment with Program Manager and subsequently discusses with the Managing Director. The final decision for assessing and granting requests lies with the Managing Director. Decision is made and documented on the Deferment, suspension, and cancellation form.	Student Support Officer and/or the Managing Director
5. Student is informed of: a. outcome in writing b. right to access internal appeals process*unless the student's health or wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, is likely to be at risk. c. the need to seek advice from immigration (Department of Home Affairs) about the potential impact to their student visa.	Student Support Officer and/or the Managing Director
6. Deferment, suspension and cancellation form, supporting evidence and correspondence to the student is filed in the overseas student's file.	Student Support Officer / Administration Officer
7. If the student does not access VSA's complaints and appeals process and has exhausted the avenue of appeal, enrolment changes will be reported on PRISMS.	Student Support Officer / Administration Officer
a. Deferral • course variation in PRISMS • new letter of offer and acceptance / COE • update Student Management System	Student Support Officer / Administration Officer
b. Suspension • Suspend in Student Management System • Course variation documents • Extend date of COE (if applicable)	
c. Cancellation • Cancel COE • Update PRISMS • Cancel student in Student Management System/close file	

VSA initiated deferral, suspension or cancellation of a student's enrolment

VSA may suspend or cancel a student's enrolment on the basis of, but not limited to:

- misbehavior by the student (breaking the Student Code of Conduct as stated in the Student Handbook);
- the student's failure to pay the required amount of money to undertake or continue the course as stated in the written agreement (student letter of offer and course acceptance agreement)
- A breach of course progress and attendance requirements by the overseas student.

For any deferral, suspension or cancellation of a student, the overseas student will be given a notice of intention to report letter and 20 working days to access VSA's internal complaints and appeals process. This applies even if an overseas student's misbehavior is grounds for immediate expulsion, unless the overseas student's health or wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, is likely to be at risk.

Where a report of misbehavior by the student has been reported, the Managing Director will seek further advice from the student, Trainers / Assessors or any other staff involved and will maintain an unbiased approach. The Managing Director will consider if the suspension or cancellation is warranted.

VSA initiated deferral, suspension or cancellation process	Responsibility
1. Overseas student is informed of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the intention and the reasons for doing so, in writing. b. right to appeal through the complaints and appeals process, within 20 working days (see appeals information) c. the need to seek advice from immigration (Department of Home Affairs) about the potential impact to their student visa. 	Student Support Officer / Managing Director
2. All correspondence to the student is filed in the overseas student's file.	Student Support Officer / Administration Officer
3. If the student does not access VSA's complaints and appeals process and has exhausted the avenue of appeal, enrolment changes will be reported on PRISMS.	Student Support Officer / Administration Officer
a. Deferral <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • course variation in PRISMS • new letter of offer and acceptance / COE • update Student Management System 	
b. Suspension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspend in Student Management System • Course variation documents • Extend date of COE (if applicable) 	
c. Cancellation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancel COE • Update PRISMS • Cancel student in Student Management System/close file 	

Internal appeals process

If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the suspension and cancellation, the student can access the internal appeals process. The student's enrolment will be maintained until the internal appeals process is completed, unless the overseas student's health or wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, is likely to be at risk.

Students must access the internal complaints and appeals process within 20 working days. For further information about VSA's complaint and appeals process, please refer to the Complaints and Appeals Policy and procedure located on the website and referred to in the International Student Handbook.

VSA may proceed with the deferral, suspension, or cancellation after the internal complaints handling and appeals process has been completed – for example, in cases of misbehavior and non-payment. The only time VSA is required to wait for both the internal and **external complaints and appeals processes** to be completed is for progress/and or attendance breaches.

The overseas student does not have to be given the opportunity to appeal a provider-initiated deferral, suspension or cancellation of enrolment when the overseas student's health or wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, is likely to be at risk. The registered provider must keep evidence to support this.

This may include, but is not limited to when the overseas student:

- Refuses to maintain approved care arrangements if they are under 18 years of age.
- Is missing.
- Has medical concerns, severe depression or psychological issues which lead the provider to fear for the overseas student's wellbeing;
- Has engaged or threatens to engage in behavior that is reasonably believed to endanger the overseas student or others; or
- Is at risk of committing a criminal offence.

Related Policy and Procedures and Forms

- Deferment, Suspension & Cancellation Form
- Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure and form
- Records Management Policy
- Financial Expulsion letter