



STUDENT COURSE VARIATION OR WITHDRAWAL POLICY

**References: NC Standard 9 Deferring, Suspending
or Cancelling the Overseas Student's Enrolment**

VERSION HISTORY

Policy Owner:		Principal	
Document Management:		Principal	
File:		POL_SS12 Student Course Variation Withdrawal Policy v3.1	
Last Updated on:		06/2023	Next Review Date: 06/2024
Changes History			
Number	Dates	Changes summary	
V3.1	June 2023	Compliance review	
V3.0	April 2022	Reviewed and updated according to the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018	
V2.1	September 2018	Quality assurance check across documents with reference to ASQA fact sheets and ESOS Act changes & Explanatory guide, Review and update as per internal audit report.	
V2.0	September 2016	Quality assurance check across documents	
v1.0	July 2016	New standards for RTO's 2015	

Pride in Excellence

DEFERRING, SUSPENDING, WITHDRAWAL

PURPOSE

South Sydney College's (SSC) course variation or withdrawal policy includes guidelines for Deferral, Leave of Absence, Change in Course, Change in Schedule, Withdrawal requests, Release requests, Change in Start Date and inactive students.

Students may, through formal agreement with their registered provider, be given permission to defer commencement, take a leave of absence or temporarily suspend their studies during the course. Such absences, however, may affect the student's visa status.

This policy also describes the limited circumstances in which students have the right to appeal the decision if deferral, suspension or cancellation of enrolment is initiated by SSC.

The registered provider may also seek to cancel the student's enrolment in certain circumstances.

REFERENCES

NC Standard 9

Deferring, suspending or cancelling the overseas student's enrolment

IMPLEMENTATION

The **CEO** is ultimately responsible for the compliance with the ESOS Act.

It is the overseas student's responsibility to seek advice from the Department of Home Affairs on the potential impact on their visa if enrolment has been deferred, suspended or cancelled.

The Principal will train staff and monitor systems to implement this policy and procedure through the Student Services Manager.

The **Student Services Manager/Administrator** is responsible for day-to-day course and student administration and counselling for students. The Manager will extract reports and meet with the Principal in relation to student study loads and requests for variations.

PROCESS

1. Course Variation Initiated by SSC

1.1. Defer Commencement Date:

SSC may defer the commencement of a course when it is not offered.

1.2. Suspension of Enrolment:

SSC may suspend a student's enrolment in the following circumstances;

- i. If the student gave false and misleading information upon application, the enrolment may be suspended while SSC considers the consequences.
- ii. Serious misconduct as outlined in the International Student Handbook.

1.3. Cancellation of Enrolment:

SSC may cancel student's enrolment in the following circumstances;

- i. Non-payment of outstanding fees
- ii. Inconsistent course progress (e.g. continuous absence from scheduled course hours, consistent unsatisfactory course progress)
- iii. Serious misconduct as outlined in the International Student Handbook
- iv. If a student is found to have provided false or misleading information, or documentation
- v. New students who at the end of week 2 from COE commencement date have not completed the orientation and enrolment, and have not received approval for a change in course or commencement date
- vi. Continuing students who at the end of week 3 after 15 consecutive days absence in the compulsory study period (term) have not re-enrolled and re-commenced the term and have not notified the College of a change in study plan.
- vii. Students must meet the requirements of the College. Breach of any of the College's rules or if their behaviour is deemed unacceptable by the College, may result in their enrolment being deferred/temporarily suspend/cancelled. In these cases, the student may not be entitled to any refund of the tuition fees or other charges paid to the College under the Contract.

1.4. Guidelines:

In cases where a student's enrolment has been suspended, deferred or cancelled by SSC except in 1.3(v) and (vi) listed above, the student will be notified and given 20 working days to access SSC's internal complaints and appeals process.

SSC will notify the relevant department via PRISMS (Provider Registration and International Student Management System) only after all internal appeals processes, and external appeals processes, if activated by the student, have been exhausted and the outcome is not in favour of the student.

2. Course Variation Requested By Student

2.1. Change in Schedule:

The student must complete SSC Change in Course/Start Date Request Form.

A student can request a change in schedule; however, it is subject to approval by the Principal.

Timetable/schedules cannot be changed in the middle of the unit. Students are discouraged from making Change in Schedule requests to accommodate work requirements – but they shall be approved where possible.

2.2. Change in Start Date:

The student must complete the SSC Change in Course/Start Date Request Form.

Students will be required to submit substantial proof to request for change in start date.

Once the approval has been granted, the start date change will be processed in the RTO Manager System and a new Offer Letter provided. Once the student accepts the new offer by submitting the signed contract the update will be made on PRISMS.

If the student wishes to start at a later date owing to medical reasons or if a visa has not been granted, he/she will not be charged any administration fees.

2.3. Change in Course:

The student must complete the SSC Request for Course variation, change form. The change in Course is subject to approval by the Principal

A student wishing to change course can do so provided accounts/fees are paid in full for the previous course and they satisfy the entry requirements for the new course.

The student must pay at least one term towards the new course.

Once the approval has been granted, the course change will be processed in the RTO Manager System and a new Offer Letter provided. Once the student accepts the new offer by submitting the signed contract the update will be made on PRISMS.

2.4. Current student – Temporary Suspension, Deferral or Leave:

The student must complete the SSC Request for Course variation, change form that includes deferral and submit substantial proof for a request for leave of absence.

Leave requests must be made a minimum of 14 days before the leave start date.

Deferment requests must be made a minimum of 14 days prior to the start date of the term for deferral. Late application may result in automatic rejection of the request.

A shorter notice will be considered only in the event of compassionate or compelling reasons.

To be approved for deferment, the student must:

- Pay the \$250 non-refundable deferment processing fee,
- Pay the full amount of course fees for the term being deferred (note: learners on deferral will still have access to all the course resources for the following term.),
- Pay all outstanding fees,
- Hold valid student visa to cover the deferment period*, and
- Submit supporting evidence to justify request for deferment

****IMPORTANT: It is the overseas student's responsibility to seek advice from the Department of Home Affairs on the potential impact on their visa if enrolment has been deferred, suspended or cancelled.***

Acceptable reasons for deferment include:

- serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the overseas 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 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 enrol.

Reasons for deferment are reviewed on a case-by-case basis in consideration of the supporting evidence provided by the student in the request.

If the request is rejected, the student keeps their enrolment and will be subject to the policies for enrolled students, including but not limited to the attendance and course progression requirements.

If approved, regardless of the reason, the period of deferment (as entered in PRISMS) will not be included in attendance monitoring calculations.

Leave of absence is subject to approval by the Principal.

Leave of absence will be treated as deferral if the course end is going to be affected owing to the absence - 4 weeks or more of absence (not including school holidays).

Leave of absence will be treated as leave if the course end is not going to be affected – less than 4 weeks of absence not including school holidays.

If treated as deferral - CoE (Confirmation of Enrolment) through PRISMS will be changed and recorded on the RTO Manager System. If treated as leave it will be recorded on the Student Management System only.

2.5. Withdrawal from the course/Change in provider

Students can complete and submit SSC Request for course withdrawal, cancellation-Form, withdrawal to withdraw from their course of study. The supporting documents, for example a doctor's certificate, should be provided with the request.

As per the National Code, Standard 7 (Overseas Student Transfers), registered providers are restricted from enrolling transferring students for the first six months from the commencement of the student's principle course of study. Therefore, students who wish to transfer to a different provider before completing six months of study at SSC (the principle course), need to apply for a Release Letter.

Students need to follow the process as outlined in the Student Transfer Provider Policy.

2.6. Effect of Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)

Upon application of deferment, suspension or cancellation, the student must be advised that deferring, suspending or cancelling their enrolment on any grounds may affect their student visa.

Reviewed on a case-by-case basis, deferring, suspending or cancelling a student's enrolment may impact their CoE in one of three ways:

- i. SSC will notify the Department of Education and Training through PRISMS that the student's enrolment is being deferred or suspended for a period without affecting the end date of the CoE. There will be no change to the CoE on PRISMS – the overseas student will still be listed as studying. However, the notice of deferment or suspension will be recorded in PRISMS.
- ii. SSC will notify the Department of Education and Training through PRISMS that the student's enrolment is being deferred or suspended for a period which will affect the end date of the CoE. PRISMS will cancel the original CoE and immediately offer the registered provider the opportunity to create a new CoE with a more appropriate end date. SSC will negotiate with the student their return date. (SSC can choose not to create a new CoE until the student has notified the registered provider of the intended date of return before creating a new CoE.)
- iii. SSC will notify the Department of Education and Training through PRISMS that it wishes to permanently cancel (terminate) the student's enrolment. Once this process is complete, the overseas student's CoE status will be listed as 'cancelled'. If

the student is under the age of 18, the cancellation of a CoE does not cancel a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW), and the registered provider is still responsible for welfare arrangements until one of the conditions of Standard 5.6 of the National Code are met.

3. Inactive Students Returning to Study:

An inactive student is a former student previously enrolled at SSC who has withdrawn through application or by failure to attend or failure to re-commence in a compulsory study period.

3.1. Process for returning to study;

- i. An inactive student submits a completed Return to Study form.
- ii. A check is performed to ensure that there are no outstanding fees from the Inactive student. Inactive students requesting to return to the College will not be accepted where previous tuition fees remain outstanding.
- iii. A determination is made as whether the Inactive Student's originally offered course is current:
 - a. Where the Inactive student's course is current, the Inactive Student will be provided with a new Offer Letter detailing the duration remaining to complete the course. Once the student accepts the new offer by submitting the signed contract the update will be made on PRISMS.
 - b. Where the Inactive Student's course has expired or is to expire before the student can complete, the student will be contacted and offered an equivalent course where available.

DOCUMENTS AND EVIDENCE

Request for course variation, change form Request for course cancellation, withdrawal form Student intervention meeting record

Warning letters and SMS notification

Letter cancellation – attendance Changes in RTO Manager System

Changes in PRISMS

Records in student file