

Deferring, Leave of Absence, and Cancelling Student's Enrolment Policy

Document

Document Name	Deferring, Leave of Absence, and Cancelling Student's Enrolment Policy
Brief Description	This policy describes the process for managing deferral, suspension, and cancellation of a student's enrolment.
Responsibility	Senior Management Team
Initial Issue Date	13 May 2010
Date for Next Review:	09 March 2025

Version Control

Date/Approval	Version No.	Summary of Changes	Reviewer Name and Department/Office
13/05/10	1	Reformatted into new policy template. Changed title to reflect correct name	Student and Academic Services
06/01/12	2	Reformatted in line with UPD	Student and Academic Services
19/06/12	3	Added statement - <i>SIBT may commence applicable disciplinary procedures if a person to whom this policy applies breaches this policy (or any of its related procedures).</i>	Student and Academic Services
09/11/12	4	Removed reference to DEST and replaced with DIAC. Replaced all references to DEEWR with DIISRTE.	Student and Academic Services
23/01/14	5	Complete review of policy. Updated document names and reference to DIBP. Census date for "W" and "WF" are now defined.	Student and Academic Services
26/08/14	6	The Academic Census Date has been updated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students deferring or withdrawing between week 1 and 4 will have their academic record deleted 	Student and Academic Services

Date/Approval	Version No.	Summary of Changes	Reviewer Name and Department/Office
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 'W' grade will be allocated for units deferred or withdrawn between week 5 and 8 A 'WF' grade will be allocated for units deferred or withdrawn after week 8 	
10/03/16	7	Updated, endorsed and approved at SMT.	Senior Management Team
09/06/17	8	Updated, endorsed and approved at SMT	Senior Management Team
06/12/18	9	Updated, endorsed and approved at SMT	Senior Management Team
9/3/23	10	Major review.	Senior Management Team

Related Documents

Name	Location
Student Complaints and Appeals Policy	SIBT Website
Admissions Policy	SIBT Website
Program Progress Policy	SIBT Website
Refund Policy	SIBT Website
Recognition of Prior Learning Policy	SIBT Website
Transfer of Provider Policy	SIBT Website
Program Withdrawal Form	SIBT Website
Leave of Absence Form	SIBT Website
Registration Variation Form	SIBT Website
Program Deferral Form	SIBT Website
Higher Education Support Act 2003	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Higher Education Provider Guidelines 2012	https://www.legislation.gov.au/



Contents

1. Purpose.....	4
2. Definitions	4
3. Application	4
4. Policy Statement	4
5. Deferral of Commencement.....	5
5.1 Deferral of Commencement by SIBT	5
5.2 Deferral of Commencement by Students	5
6. Suspending the Program/Leave of Absence	6
6.1 Suspension of Enrolment by SIBT	6
6.2 Leave of Absence by Students	6
7. Cancellation/Withdrawal	7
7.1 Cancellation of Enrolment by SIBT	8
7.2 Withdrawal of Enrolment by Students	8
7.3 Withdrawal of Unit/s by Students	9
Appendix A: Extenuating (Compassionate and Compelling) Circumstances	10
Appendix B: Acceptable Supporting Documentation	11

1. Purpose

- a) The purpose of the Deferring, Leave of Absence, and Cancelling Student's Enrolment Policy is to provide a framework for managing:
 - i. Deferral, suspension, and cancellation of a student's enrolment by the Sydney Institute of Business and Technology (SIBT);
 - ii. Deferral, leave of absence, and withdrawal of an enrolment initiated by a student;
 - iii. Unit withdrawal initiated by a student.

2. Definitions

Term	Meaning
Deferral	A deferral is a temporary postponement of the program commencement date after an offer in a course of study has been made. Deferral may be initiated by the student or by SIBT.
Suspension of Enrolment	Suspension of enrolment means placing a student's enrolment temporarily on hold. Suspension of enrolment is initiated by SIBT.
Leave of Absence	A Leave of Absence is a temporary break from studying after a student has commenced their course of study. Students must apply for the Leave of Absence.
Withdrawal	Withdrawal is a cancellation of the enrolment upon student's request - withdrawal from all units in a study period with no units planned for in a future study period; failure to enrol in future study periods; transfer to another provider. Withdrawal may also occur on the unit level.
Cancellation of Enrolment	Cancellation of an enrolment is a permanent cessation of a student's enrolment initiated by SIBT.
DHA	Department of Home Affairs
eCoE	electronic Confirmation of Enrolment
PRISMS	Provider Registration and International Student Management System
Academic Census Date	Last day of week eight (8) in any given study period.
Financial Census Date	Last day of week four (4) in any given study period.

3. Application

The Deferring, Leave of Absence, and Cancelling Student's Enrolment Policy applies to all current students and offer holders of SIBT.

4. Policy Statement

- a) SIBT recognises that students may need to defer commencement of the program, take a break during their studies (leave of absence), or withdraw from their program or unit/s of study prior to or following the commencement at SIBT.
- b) All requests must be submitted in writing using the relevant form. Decisions on such requests will consider the information provided, the circumstances leading to a request, as well as any regulatory requirements.

- c) International students must be aware that deferment, suspension/leave of absence, or cancellation/withdrawal of enrolment may affect their student visa.
 - i. SIBT will notify the Government via the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) of any deferment, suspension/leave of absence or cancellation/withdrawal of an international student's enrolment.
 - ii. If a student is not currently enrolled and remains on shore beyond 28 days, the student may be required to return to their home country as part of their visa condition. For more information students should refer to the Department of Home Affairs (DHA).
- d) Where a student, domestic or international, is under 18 years of age, SIBT also requires a letter supporting the deferment, request for leave of absence, or withdrawal from a parent or legal guardian.
- e) SIBT will always advise a student in writing on the:
 - i. Outcome of their application; and
 - ii. Change in their enrolment status;
 - iii. Financial, academic, and legal implications of the above.
- f) Documentary evidence relating to any application will be placed on the student's confidential file.

5. Deferral of Commencement

5.1 Deferral of Commencement by SIBT

- a) SIBT may, on an occasion, defer the commencement of a program to the next available study period due to the provider's default.
- b) SIBT will notify students in writing that a course of study is no longer available for the prescribed period and will advise students accordingly of the next available intake.

5.2 Deferral of Commencement by Students

- a) If any new commencing student wishes to defer their offer to a future study period, they or their agent must advise SIBT in writing using the 'Program Deferral Form'.
- b) The Program Deferral applications:
 - i. Must be submitted up until the Financial Census Date of the first study period;
 - ii. Are considered by the Admissions Manager or nominee usually within 10 working days.
- c) Program Deferral applications for international students will not be processed without supporting documentary evidence (see Appendices A and B of this policy).
- d) International students will be permitted to defer for the following reasons only:
 - iii. Inability to gain a student visa in time for entry into the study period of application;
 - iv. Failure to meet entry requirements;
 - v. Extenuating (compassionate or compelling) circumstances as outlined in the Appendix A of this policy.
- e) If the deferral request is for an international student, the electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE) will be cancelled and a new eCoE will be issued. If the student visa has already been issued the student should contact the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) as a deferment could impact their visa.

- f) Domestic students wishing to defer commencement are not required to provide explanation or evidence.
- g) Students, both domestic and international, may apply for a deferral of the commencement of the program for a maximum of one (1) study period at a time, for a maximum of three (3) study periods in total.
- h) SIBT will only allow students to defer commencement of studies twice. If a third request for deferral of offer is made, SIBT may refuse the request. For international students, cancellation charges may be applied as at the date of the initial deferral unless extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances are evidenced and accepted (see Appendices A and B of this policy).

6. Suspending the Program/Leave of Absence

6.1 Suspension of Enrolment by SIBT

- a) SIBT may suspend a student's enrolment due to the following, but not limited, circumstances:
 - i. Significant academic or non-academic misconduct;
 - ii. Unsatisfactory academic progress;
 - iii. Foundation Program international students not maintaining satisfactory attendance requirement;
 - iv. Non-payment of fees.
- b) Suspension of enrolment may affect an international student's visa status. International students must contact the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) for further information and advice.

6.2 Leave of Absence by Students

- a) Students, domestic or international may apply for a leave of absence, using a 'Leave of Absence Form'.
- b) The Leave of Absence applications:
 - i. May be submitted at any time before or during a study period except for the first study period pre-census which constitutes deferral. Please refer to section 5.2;
 - ii. Are considered by the Student Learning and Welfare Support Manager or nominee usually within 10 working days.
- c) Students are encouraged to meet with a Student Learning Advisor to discuss their options.
- d) Leave of Absence applications for international students will not be processed without supporting documentary evidence (see Appendices A and B of this policy). International students should be aware of the impact of the leave of absence may have on a student's ability to complete their course within the duration of their student visa and must contact the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) for further information and advice.
- e) Approval of the leave of absence does not mean an eCoE extension will automatically be processed. International students may need to request an extension, if required.
- f) Domestic students wishing to apply for the leave of absence are not required to provide explanation or evidence.

- g) Students, domestic or international, can apply for a leave of absence for one (1) study period at a time, for a maximum of three (3) study periods in total.
- h) Withdrawing from all units or failing to register in units for the current study period does not constitute a leave of absence.
- i) Students who do not register in units for the current study period of their program, and who have not applied for the leave of absence, may lose their place in their program of study.

7. Cancellation/Withdrawal

- a) Cancellation or program/unit withdrawal may take place at any time before or during a study period.
- b) Academic and financial penalties may apply depending upon the time of the cancellation or program/unit withdrawal.
- c) The following academic grades may be applied based on the date of the application (Program Withdrawal Form/Registration Variation Form) is received, or decision of cancellation of the enrolment is made. For cancellation or withdrawals occurring:
 - i. Between weeks one (1) and four (4), students will have their academic record for the relevant study period cancelled;
 - ii. Between weeks five (5) and eight (8), students will have a 'W' (Withdrawn) grade allocated. 'W' grade will not impact their final GPA (Grade Point Average);
 - iii. After week eight (8), students will have a 'WF' (Withdrawn Fail) grade allocated. 'WF' grade will impact their final GPA (Grade Point Average).
- d) The following financial liabilities may be applied based on the date of the application (Program Withdrawal Form/Registration Variation Form) is received, or decision of cancellation of the enrolment is made. For cancellation or withdrawals occurring:
 - i. Before the Financial Census Date (end of week 4):
 - Domestic Students – no financial liabilities;
 - International Students – partial financial liabilities;
 - ii. After the Financial Census Date (beginning of week 5):
 - Domestic Students – full financial liabilities, including FEE-HEP debts;
 - International students – full financial liabilities.

For further information and deadlines please refer to the Refund Policy.
- e) If a student has experienced extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances (see Appendix A of this policy), they may apply to withdraw without financial and/or academic penalties.
 - i. If a student withdraws after the Academic Census Date and extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances are evidenced and accepted, they will receive a 'W' (Withdrawal) grade.
 - ii. Students requesting a refund of their fees due to extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances must also submit a 'Refund Form'.

7.1 Cancellation of Enrolment by SIBT

- a) SIBT may cancel a student's enrolment due to the following, but not limited, circumstances:
 - i. Significant academic or non-academic misconduct;
 - ii. Unsatisfactory academic progress;
 - iii. Foundation Program international students not maintaining satisfactory attendance requirement;
 - iv. Non-payment of fees.
- b) Where the student is under 18 year of age, the student's guardian and/or parents will be informed of the situation and requested to provide assistance.
- c) In cases of cancellation of the enrolment by SIBT, the student will be notified in writing of SIBT's intention and will be given reasons. Such advice will inform the student that they are able to access SIBT's Student Complaints and Appeals Policy within 20 working days of receipt of the intention to cancel notification (see the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy).
 - i. Where the student has chosen to access the Student Complaints and Appeals process within the 20-working day period and the process results in a decision supporting the student, the student's enrolment will continue for the study period.
 - ii. Where the student has:
 - Chosen not to access the Student Complaints and Appeals process within the 20-working day period; or
 - Withdrawn from the process; or
 - Accessed the process and it resulted in a decision supporting SIBT, then SIBT will advise the student in writing of the final decision and the student's enrolment will be cancelled. In the case of international students, SIBT will cancel the student's electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE) and notify the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) when the student's enrolment is cancelled.
- d) While the complaint and appeal process is being conducted, the student's enrolment will be maintained and the student will be permitted to attend classes as normal.
- e) Cancellation of enrolment may affect an international student's visa status. International students must contact the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) for further information and advice.

7.2 Withdrawal of Enrolment by Students

- a) A domestic or international student who, **prior to the program commencement date**, wishes to withdraw from the entire program must advise SIBT in writing. Please refer to the Admissions Policy.
- b) A domestic or international student who, **after the program commencement date**, wishes to withdraw from the entire program must complete the 'Program Withdrawal Form'.
- c) The 'Program Withdrawal' applications are considered by the Student Learning and Welfare Support Manager or nominee usually within 10 working days.
- d) An international student applying to withdraw in order to transfer to another educational provider, prior to the completion of six (6) months in their primary course, should refer to the Transfer of Provider Policy.

- e) Students not returning from their scheduled break, or the approved leave of absence will be considered as inactively intending to withdraw from their program. SIBT will undertake necessary steps to contact students before cancelling their enrolment as per the Enrolment Policy
- c) Withdrawal of enrolment may affect the international student's visa status. International students wishing to withdraw their enrolment must contact the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) for further information and advice.

7.3 Withdrawal of Unit/s by Students

- a) A domestic or international student who, wishes to withdraw from unit/s, whilst maintaining their enrolment, must complete the 'Registration Variation Form'.
- b) Students are strongly encouraged to seek advice from the Program Convenor regarding changes to unit enrolment and selection.
- c) The 'Registration Variation' applications:
 - i. May be submitted at any time before or during a study period;
 - ii. Are considered by the Student Learning and Welfare Support Manager or nominee usually within 10 working days.
- d) When withdrawing from a unit/s, an international student must ensure they maintain equivalent full-time enrolment of eight (8) units per academic year to satisfy student visa requirements, except where an Intervention Strategy Plan (with interventions such as conditional enrolment or an approved reduced study load) has been put in place by SIBT. For more information on enrolment refer to the Enrolment Policy and Program Progress Policy.
- d) Withdrawal of units may affect the international student's visa status. International students wishing to withdraw their units must contact the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) for further information and advice.

Appendix A: Extenuating (Compassionate and Compelling) Circumstances

- a) Extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances are unusual or abnormal events or situations that:
 - i. Occurred on or after the Financial Census Date, or the impact of which was realised on or after Financial Census Date;
 - ii. Are beyond a student's control and could not reasonably have been foreseen or prevented; and
 - iii. Have been severe enough to prevent them from successfully completing their unit of study.
- b) Extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Serious illness or injury, including deterioration of a pre-existing health condition;
 - ii. Family or personal circumstances which have severely impacted the student's ability to continue with study;
 - iii. Bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents;
 - iv. Major political upheaval or natural disaster, in the case of international students this may include such situations occurring in their home country requiring emergency travel where this has impacted on the international student's studies;
 - v. 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 psychologists' reports);
 - vi. Where SIBT was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit, or the international student has failed a pre-requisite unit and therefore faces a shortage of relevant units for which they are eligible to enrol.
- c) Students whose circumstances are outside the ones listed above should seek assistance from the Student Support or other professional services and attach supporting documentation obtained from them. The 'other' circumstances may include but are not limited to:
 - i. Severe disruption to domestic arrangements;
 - ii. Relationship breakdown;
 - iii. Religious observance or obligations;
 - iv. Formal legal commitments;
 - v. Jury duty;
 - vi. Military or/and emergency service;
 - vii. Service with a recognised emergency management service;
 - viii. Participation in significant national or international events.
- d) Students will need to be able to prove their claim for extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances by providing appropriate supporting documentation (see Appendix B).

Appendix B: Acceptable Supporting Documentation

Circumstances	Documents
Visa Delay/Refusal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A letter advising that the applicant has not been able to obtain a visa yet issued by Department of Home Affairs (DHA); Visa refusal letter issued by Department of Home Affairs (DHA).
Failure to meet academic and/or English entry requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IELTS (or similar) test results; or High school results (or similar)
Medical and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An original certificate/letter/report from a doctor or registered treating health professional on a letterhead, including signature or providers stamp, provider's number, and a statement that student was unable to attend classes; A medical certificate stating just "illness" or "medical condition" or "medical reason" may not be sufficient.
Personal and Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A statement from a doctor, counsellor, social worker, or independent member of the community (e.g., A Justice of the Peace or a Minister of Religion); A certificate from a funeral director; A death certificate; A certified call to Australian Defence Forces; A letter/report describing the nature of emergency attended by the State Emergency Service or Country/Rural Fire Service; A copy of an accident report; A court summons or similar.
Academic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A copy of any academic advice received from their program convenor or a student learning advisor.

- a) Supporting documentation for extenuating (compassionate or compelling) circumstances must be from an independent source or authority, and clearly indicate:
 - i. What the special circumstances were;
 - ii. When they occurred;
 - iii. How long they lasted;
 - iv. The level of impact of the special circumstances.
- b) A personal statement from a student, their friend or family member, outlining their circumstances is not sufficient evidence to demonstrate extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances.
- c) For international students a lack of funds is not accepted by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) as an extenuation (compassionate and compelling) reason to defer or take leave. It is a condition of a student visa that students have access to funds to cover their tuition fees and cost of living for their first year of study in Australia. International students should not rely on income from paid employment while in Australia to cover their fees and living expenses during this period. Students experiencing an unexpected and unforeseeable change in circumstances should meet with student support to discuss their situation.
- d) Supporting documentation must be in English (or accompanied by certified translation), on official letterhead (if relevant), signed, and dated.