

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

## Document

<b>Document Name</b>	Deferring, Leave of Absence, and Cancelling Student's Enrolment Policy
<b>Brief Description</b>	This policy describes the process for managing deferral, leave of absence, withdrawal, exclusion and cancellation relating to a student's enrolment at Sydney Institute of Business and Technology (SIBT).
<b>Responsible Officers</b>	Director of Student and Academic Services and Director of Marketing and Admissions
<b>Delegated Approver</b>	Senior Management Team
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## Version Control

Date/Approval	Version No.	Summary of Changes	Reviewer Name and Department/Office
13/2/25	11	Strengthened Purpose, added clarity to Definitions, edited language to improve comprehension, replaced Suspend with an Exclusion Clause, added Cancellation of Enrolment by SIBT and included Monitoring in Review Clause. Added hyperlinks for easy access to forms, policies and DHA.	Senior Management Team

## Related Documents

Name	Location
Academic Integrity Policy	<a href="#">SIBT Website</a>
Admissions Policy	<a href="#">SIBT Website</a>
Attendance Policy	<a href="#">SIBT Website</a>
Enrolment Policy	<a href="#">SIBT Website</a>

Name	Location
Program Progress Policy	<a href="#">SIBT Website</a>
Refund Policy	<a href="#">SIBT Website</a>
Student Code of Conduct	<a href="#">SIBT Website</a>
Student Complaints and Appeals Policy	<a href="#">SIBT Website</a>
Withdrawal from Program Form	<a href="#">SIBT Website</a>
Leave of Absence Form	<a href="#">SIBT Website</a>
Registration Variation Form	<a href="#">SIBT Website</a>
Program Deferral Request	<a href="#">StudyLink</a>
Higher Education Support Act 2003	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.au/">https://www.legislation.gov.au/</a>
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.au/">https://www.legislation.gov.au/</a>
Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.au/">https://www.legislation.gov.au/</a>
National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.au/">https://www.legislation.gov.au/</a>
Higher Education Provider Guidelines 2012	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.au/">https://www.legislation.gov.au/</a>

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## 1. Purpose

- a) The purpose of this Policy is to provide a framework for managing:
- Deferral or withdrawal of a program enrolment by a commencing student;
  - Leave of absence or withdrawal of enrolment in a program or unit by a student;
  - Deferral or cancellation of a student's enrolment by SIBT;
  - Exclusion of a student by SIBT.

## 2. Definitions

Term	Meaning
<b>Academic Census Date</b>	The final date students can withdraw from units without academic penalty is the last teaching day in week eight (8).
<b>Cancellation of Enrolment</b>	The students' place in a program is cancelled and they cease to be an SIBT student.
<b>Deferral</b>	A temporary postponement of the program's commencement date after an offer in a course of study has been made. Deferrals must occur prior to Financial Census and may be initiated by the student or by SIBT.
<b>DHA</b>	Department of Home Affairs
<b>eCoE</b>	electronic Confirmation of Enrolment
<b>Exclusion</b>	When SIBT cancels a student's enrolment and excludes them from their program for a period of 12 months (three (3) study periods).
<b>Financial Census Date</b>	The final date students can apply for or withdraw from units without incurring a debt is the last teaching day in week four (4). The Census date is a minimum of 20% of the way through a unit.
<b>Leave of Absence</b>	A temporary break from studying by a student who has completed at least one full session of study.
<b>Passive Withdrawal by Student</b>	Where a student fails to enrol in units before the deadline and has not applied for Leave of Absence or been in contact with Student Services to discuss options.
<b>Program Withdrawal</b>	A student-initiated withdrawal from all units in a study period with no intention to enrol in a future study period
<b>Unit Withdrawal</b>	A withdrawal from unit enrolment/s initiated by the student.
<b>PRISMS</b>	Provider Registration and International Student Management System

## 3. Application

This Policy applies to all current and commencing students of SIBT.

## 4. Policy Statement

- a) Once a student is admitted to a program, it is expected they will study continuously with a full study load in each subsequent study session following admission. However, SIBT recognises that a student may need to defer commencement of the program, take a leave of absence during their studies, or withdraw from their program or selected unit/s of study.

- b) All applications to defer, take a leave of absence or withdraw enrolment in a program or unit/s, must be submitted using the relevant online form and, where appropriate, include appropriate supporting evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances ([Appendix A and B](#)).
- c) International students should be aware of how a deferment, leave of absence, withdrawal or cancellation of enrolment may affect their student visa.
  - i. SIBT must notify the DHA via PRISMS of any deferment, leave of absence, withdrawal or cancellation of an international student's enrolment.
  - ii. For information on how a student's visa may be affected in each situation, the student is advised to contact the DHA at 131 881 (or +61 2 6196 0196 from outside Australia) or visit <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au>. For complex issues, they should consider consulting a registered migration agent for advice.
- d) Where a student (domestic or international), is under 18 years of age, a letter supporting the application for deferment, leave of absence, or withdrawal must be provided from the parent or legal guardian.
- e) SIBT will provide students with written confirmation of the:
  - i. Outcome of their application; and
  - ii. Change in their enrolment status; and
  - iii. Any financial, academic, and/or legal implications of the above.
- f) Documentary evidence of compassionate and compelling circumstances provided to support an application will be placed on the student's confidential file.

## 5. Deferral of Commencement

### 5.1 Deferral of Commencement by SIBT

- a) In the event where SIBT defers the commencement of a program to the next available study period (provider's default), SIBT will notify students in writing that a course of study is no longer being offered for the prescribed period and will advise students accordingly of the next available intake and options.

### 5.2 Deferral of Commencement by Students

- a) A commencing student who chooses to defer their offer to a future study period can change their status to Deferral in StudyLink;
- b) The program deferral application:
  - i. Must be submitted before the Financial Census Date of the first study period;
  - ii. Will be assessed by the Admissions Manager or nominee usually within 10 working days and prior to the Financial Census date;
  - iii. May be completed by the student or their agent.
- c) Students' deferral applications cover one (1) study period at a time and SIBT will only accept a maximum of three (3) subsequent study periods deferrals.
- d) Deferral applications for international students will not be processed without supporting documentary evidence (see [Appendices A and B](#)).
- e) International student's deferral applications will only be considered for the following reasons:
  - i. Inability to gain a student visa in time for entry into the study period of application; or
  - i. Failure to meet entry requirements; or

- ii. Extenuating (compassionate or compelling) circumstances can be supported by evidence as outlined in the [Appendix A](#).
- f) A maximum of two (2) consecutive terms will be granted for periods of deferral. Extensions beyond this are only granted in exceptional circumstances.
- g) If an international student's deferral application is approved, the electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE) will be cancelled and a new eCoE issued. If the student visa has already been issued the student will need to contact the [DHA](#) as a deferment could impact their visa.
- h) Domestic students are not required to provide an explanation or evidence with their application to defer commencement.
- i) Cancellation charges may be applied. When a student defers more than once, the date of the initial deferral will be used when determining the cancellation fee unless extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances are evidenced and accepted refer [Appendices A and B](#). Please refer to the [Refund Policy](#) for details.

## 6. Withdrawals from a Program or Unit by a Student

### 6.1 Withdrawal from Unit/s

- a) Any student (domestic or international) who wishes to withdraw from a unit or units, whilst maintaining their enrolment, must complete the '[Registration Variation Form](#)'.
- b) Students are strongly encouraged to seek advice first from the Program Convenor regarding the impact of changes to their unit enrolments.
- c) Registration Variation applications may be submitted at any time before or during a study period and will be assessed by the Student Services Manager or nominee usually within 10 working days.
- d) International students must ensure that they maintain an equivalent full-time study load to satisfy student visa requirements. An equivalent full-time study load is eight (8) units per academic year. International students are required to meet with a Student Learning Advisor before applying to withdraw from a unit or units to ensure appropriate supports can be put in place to support progression and that their study load continues to meet student visa requirements. For more information on unit enrolment and impacts on progression refer to the [Enrolment Policy](#) and [Program Progress Policy](#).
- e) Withdrawal from units may affect an international student's visa status. International students wishing to withdraw from units are advised to contact [DHA](#) for further information and advice.

### 6.2 Withdrawal from a Program

- a) If a student (domestic or international) wishes to withdraw from the program, **prior to the program commencement date**, they can advise SIBT by:
  - i. Send a message through the application in StudyLink via email, or
  - ii. Emailing [admissions@sibt.nsw.edu.au](mailto:admissions@sibt.nsw.edu.au)
- b) If a student (domestic or international) wishes to withdraw from the program, **after the program commencement date**, they must complete the '[Withdrawal from Program Form](#)'.

- c) Withdrawal from Program applications are assessed by the Student Services Manager or nominee usually within 10 working days.
- d) An international student wishing to withdraw from their program of study to transfer to another educational provider, prior to the completion of six (6) months in their primary course, should speak to a Student Learning Advisor for clarification on the criteria, (refer to the [Transfer of Provider Policy](#)).
- e) Students who do not return from session break, or an approved leave of absence, which results in a failure to enrol in units, will be considered to have initiated a passive withdrawal from their program. SIBT will undertake necessary steps to contact students before cancelling their enrolment (refer to the [Enrolment Policy](#));
- f) Withdrawal of enrolment may affect an international student's visa status. International students wishing to withdraw their enrolment must contact [DHA](#) for further information and advice.

### 6.3 Financial Considerations for Withdrawals

- a) Academic and financial charges may apply depending on the timing of the withdrawal application.
- b) The following financial charges may be applied based on the date the application is received, or, in some cases when the first decision to cancel an enrolment is made. Students are advised to check with a Student Learning Advisor on the potential charges for their situation. For withdrawals occurring:
  - i. Before the Financial Census Date (last teaching day in week 4):
    - a) Domestic Students – no financial charges;
    - b) International Students – partial financial charges;
  - ii. After the Financial Census Date (beginning of week 5):
    - c) Domestic Students – full financial charges, including FEE-HELP debts;
    - d) International students – full financial charges.
- c) If a student has experienced extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances (see [Appendix A](#)), they may apply to withdraw without financial charges.

For further information on charges and deadlines please refer to the [Refund Policy](#).

### 6.4 Academic Considerations for Withdrawals

- a) The following academic grades may be applied based on the date the application is received, or decision to cancel the enrolment is made. For withdrawals occurring:
  - i. Between weeks one and four (1-4), students will have their academic record for the relevant study period removed and will not appear on the student's Academic Transcript.
  - ii. Between weeks five and eight (5-8), 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).
- b) If a student has experienced extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances (see [Appendix A](#)), they may apply to withdraw without 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 Request Form'](#) (refer [Refund Policy](#)) and provide acceptable supporting evidence.

## 7. Leave of Absence Applications

- a) Students can only apply for a Leave of Absence after they have completed at least one full session.
- b) Students must use the online ['Leave of Absence Form'](#) when applying for a leave of absence.
- c) Students are encouraged to meet with a Student Learning Advisor to discuss their options and receive support in the application process. Incomplete applications will not be considered
- d) Leave of Absence applications must be submitted prior to the Financial Census Date (last teaching day in week 4):.
- e) Leave of Absence applications are assessed by the Student Services Manager or nominee usually within 10 working days.
- f) Students can only apply for a leave of absence for one (1) study period at a time, for a maximum of three (3) study periods in total.
- g) International student Leave of Absence requirements:
  - i. Applications will not be processed if they are incomplete and/or do not include the required supporting documentary evidence (see [Appendices A and B](#)).
  - ii. All documents that are not in English must be officially translated.
  - iii. Prior to submitting a Leave of Absence application, the student must meet with a Student Learning Advisor to ensure they understand the impact a leave of absence may have on their ability to complete their course within the duration of their student visa.
  - iv. Students are advised to contact the [DHA](#) for further information and advice.
  - v. Approval of the leave of absence application does not mean an eCoE extension will automatically be processed.
- h) Withdrawing from all units or failing to register in units for the current study period does not constitute a leave of absence.

## 8. Exclusion from an SIBT Program

- a) SIBT may cancel a student's enrolment and exclude them from reenrolment at SIBT for a specified period due to the following circumstances (refer [Program Progress Policy](#)):
  - i. A student fails to meet satisfactory progress for a third time;
  - ii. A student fails the same unit, on three (3) separate occasions.
- b) Cancellation of enrolment and Exclusion may affect an international student's visa status. International students must contact the [DHA](#) for further information and advice.

- c) An excluded student seeking readmission to SIBT, must apply at least four (4) weeks prior to the commencement of the study period in which the student seeks to resume study. The application for readmission will be assessed by the Academic Director

## 9. Cancellation of Enrolment by SIBT

- a) SIBT may cancel a student's enrolment due to circumstances that include but are not limited to:
  - i. Unit registration has not been completed by the enrolment deadline and the student has been uncontactable. This is considered a passive student-initiated withdrawal; or
  - ii. The required fees have not been paid by the specified date for the units of study the student has registered for (refer to the student Offer Letter and [Refund Policy](#)); or
  - iii. The student has been engaged in any form of academic misconduct associated with an SIBT program (refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#)); or
  - iv. The student has been engaged in any form of non-academic misconduct (refer to the [Student Code of Conduct](#)); or
  - v. The student has failed to satisfy the minimum academic progression requirements (refer to the [Program Progress Policy](#)); or
  - vi. International Foundation Program student has failed to maintain the minimum level of attendance required (refer to the [Attendance Policy](#)); or
  - vii. Enrolment by the student would cause any member of SIBT, including staff and students, or its agents, to act unlawfully; or
  - viii. DHA has cancelled the student's visa; or
  - ix. For any other reason as determined by the College Director and Principal.
- b) SIBT will sent warning notifications to students who are identified as being at risk of their enrolment being cancelled.
- c) SIBT will notify the student of the intention to cancel their enrolment and inform the student of the reasons and their right to appeal this decision within 20 working days of receipt of the intention to cancel notification, as per the [Student Complaints and Appeals Policy](#)
- d) SIBT may vary conditions of a student's enrolment to comply with Australian laws and/or regulations (including any amendments to these). Students will be notified in writing of any variations to their enrolment under these circumstances.
- e) Where the student is under 18 year of age, the student's guardian and/or parents will be contacted by the Student Counsellor to keep them informed of the situation.
- f) While an appeal process is being conducted, the student's enrolment will be maintained, and the student will be permitted to attend classes as normal.
- g) Cancellation of enrolment may affect an international student's visa status. International students must contact [DHA](#) for further information and advice.

## 10. Appeal

- a) Students can appeal decisions and penalties applied where they meet the grounds for appeal under the [Student Complaints and Appeals Policy](#).

- b) Appeal can be made using the online [Formal Appeal Form](#) within 20-working days of receiving the SIBT notification. All supporting documents and other evidence must be submitted with the Appeal application.
- c) 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.
- d) Where the student has:
  - i. Chosen not to access the Student Complaints and Appeals process within the 20-working day period; or
  - ii. Withdrawn from the appeal process; or
  - iii. 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 and the student will be informed of their right to externally appeal the SIBT decision.
- e) In the case of international students, SIBT will cancel the student's electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE) and notify DHA when the student's enrolment is cancelled.

## 11. Monitoring and Review

- a) The Director of Academic and Student Services monitors the effectiveness and appropriateness of the processes under this Policy and reports outcomes annually to the Senior Management Team. The effectiveness monitoring is used to facilitate the identification of continuous improvement opportunities and risk identification and mitigation.
- b) This Policy is periodically reviewed (minimum of every 3 years) by the Responsible Officer and the Quality and Compliance Manager to ensure alignment with regulatory compliance requirements, legislation, regulation, and guidelines.

## 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:
    - e) Involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or
    - f) 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. Religious observance or obligations;
  - iii. Formal legal commitments;
  - iv. Jury duty;
  - v. Military or/and emergency service;
  - vi. Service with a recognised emergency management service;
  - vii. 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
<b>Visa Delay/Refusal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A letter advising that the applicant has not been able to obtain a visa yet issued by DHA;</li> <li>Visa refusal letter issued by DHA.</li> </ul>
<b>Failure to meet academic and/or English entry requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IELTS (or similar) test results; or</li> <li>High school results (or similar)</li> </ul>
<b>Medical and Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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;</li> <li>A medical certificate stating just "illness" or "medical condition" or "medical reason" may not be sufficient.</li> </ul>
<b>Personal and Welfare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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);</li> <li>A certificate from a funeral director;</li> <li>A death certificate;</li> <li>A certified call to Australian Defence Forces;</li> <li>A letter/report describing the nature of emergency attended by the State Emergency Service or Country/Rural Fire Service;</li> <li>A copy of an accident report;</li> <li>A court summons or similar.</li> </ul>
<b>Academic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A copy of any academic advice received from their program convenor or a student learning advisor.</li> </ul>

In accordance with the Australian Medical Association's (AMA) guidance, online medical certificates provided as a result of technology-based patient consultations are an appropriate alternative to consulting with a patient in the same physical room, when they are used:

- i. as an adjunct to normal medical practice;
- ii. for regular patients of the practice;
- iii. for patients who have been referred by another medical practitioner; and
- iv. when it is clinically appropriate for the patient's circumstances.

SIBT will accept online medical certificates if:

- v. it is evident that a tele-health consultation was necessary and appropriate in the given circumstances, based on the criteria listed above;
- vi. it was provided by an AHPRA registered provider; and
- vii. it can be confirmed that the service was provided as a Tele-Health Service e.g. through Skype, FaceTime etc.

All online medical certificates submitted as part of an application will be verified as part of the process to confirm their appropriateness and authenticity

Supporting documents **MUST** have:

- 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 specific dates they covered;
  - v. The level of impact of the special circumstances.

Supporting documentation must be in English (or accompanied by certified translation), on official letterhead (if relevant), signed, and dated.

What are NOT acceptable supporting documents:

- a) 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.
- b) For international students a lack of funds is not accepted by 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.