



Deferment, Suspension & Cancellation of Study Policy & Procedure

1 Preliminaries

Commencement

1.1 This policy and procedure commenced on the 1st of April 2024.

Purpose

1.2 This policy and procedure outlines how the Australian Guild of Education (“AGE”) will assess, approve and record deferment of the commencement of study, suspension of study, or cancellation of study for international students at AGE in compliance with the [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000](#) (ESOS Act), the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#) (National Code 2018) and the [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#).

Application

1.3 This policy and procedure applies to all students at AGE and to all staff involved in assessing, approving and recording applications from students to defer, suspend or cancel their study.

2 Definitions

The following definitions apply in this document:

Absence means not attending any number of classes or weeks in a unit and semester in which a student has already enrolled.

Cancellation means an Institute-initiated termination of enrolment.

Census Date means the final day for withdrawal from a course or unit of study without incurring an academic penalty and/or a financial liability.

CoE means Confirmation of Enrolment and is a document provided electronically, which is issued by AGE to intending overseas students and which must accompany their application for a student visa. The CoE confirms the overseas student’s eligibility to enrol in the particular course at AGE.

Deferment means delaying commencement of the course, i.e. delaying first (initial) semester only.

Extension means increasing the duration and changing the expected completion date for a course.



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International Student means an onshore student with a student visa.

Onshore Student means a student studying at AGE whilst located within the geographical boundaries of Australia.

PRISMS means the Provider Registration and International Student Management System database.

Special Consideration may be granted to students who apply for it on the grounds of serious circumstances outside their control that could affect an assessment.

Suspension/Leave of Absence means not effectively enrolling in any units for the whole of any single subsequent semester (after having already enrolled in and completed at least one semester).

Withdrawal means a Student-initiated termination of enrolment.

3 Policy Statement

3.1 Under the requirements of the ESOS Act and National Code 2018, if an international student has enrolled in a course, they are not permitted to defer commencement of their studies or suspend their studies, except on the grounds of compassionate or compelling circumstances. If a student defers or suspends their studies on any other grounds, AGE has the right to not approve the request and may report the student as not complying with visa conditions.

3.2 Deferments will only be granted prior to course commencement and in the following limited circumstances:

3.2.1 Student visa delay (international students only); or

3.2.2 Compassionate or compelling circumstances (domestic and international students).

3.3 Student-initiated suspensions will only be granted once the course has commenced and in the following limited circumstances:

3.3.1 Compassionate or compelling circumstances (domestic and international students); or

3.3.2 For the balance of the semester and renewable for one more semester.

3.4 A student may only take a leave of absence through the formal application process as referred to under Student-initiated suspension.

3.5 Students who take a leave of absence without approval will be categorised as having abandoned their studies, irrespective of the duration of time absent.



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- 3.6 Students who are categorised as having abandoned their studies forfeit their right to a refund.
- 3.7 All students are subject to the potential for AGE-initiated suspension of study or cancellation of enrolment in the event of either academic or non-academic misconduct, unsatisfactory academic performance or non-payment of tuition fees.
- 3.8 AGE may cancel a student's enrolment based on the following:
- 3.8.1 misbehaviour by the student
 - 3.8.2 the student's failure to pay an amount they were required to pay to AGE to undertake or continue the course as stated in the written agreement
 - 3.8.3 a breach of course progress or attendance requirements by an international student.
- 3.9 Students will be made aware of the circumstances in which their studies may be suspended for misconduct prior to enrolment.
- 3.10 A student's enrolment may be immediately cancelled without the opportunity for an appeal where the student's health or wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, is likely to be at risk.
- 3.11 A student whose behaviour is determined to be in breach of the AGE Code of Conduct and Shared Responsibility Policy may have their enrolment cancelled or suspended, with the right to an appeal subject to the misbehaviour not impacting on the student's health or wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others.
- 3.12 In the instance where tuition fees are outstanding, a warning letter will be issued to the student providing seven (7) working days to make a payment or enter into a payment arrangement with AGE.
- 3.13 If no payment or arrangement is made, or if the payment arrangement is broken, AGE will initiate a Cancellation of Enrolment
- 3.14 All issues surrounding course progression are dealt with within the *Course Progression Policy and Procedure*.
- 3.15 Students may appeal decisions regarding suspension.
- 3.16 Students may appeal decisions regarding cancellation when advised of the opportunity to appeal.
- 3.17 International students must be made aware that any change to their enrolment may affect their student visa.



4 Responsibilities

4.1 The Registrar has the responsibility to:

- (a) ensure that any changes to an international student's course enrolment are reported to the relevant Government department(s) via PRISMS.
- (b) make decisions regarding non-academic deferment of course commencement, student-initiated suspension, AGE-initiated suspension or AGE-initiated cancellation.
- (c) interview students who have requested a suspension of their studies.
- (d) ensure that international students are informed that changes to their enrolment may affect their student visa conditions.
- (e) notify students of any intention to report them to the relevant government department(s).
- (f) issue warning letters to students with overdue fees providing seven (7) working days to make a payment or enter into a payment arrangement with AGE.

4.2 The Dean has the responsibility to:

- (a) collect supporting evidence regarding a request to suspend a student's studies due to misconduct.
- (b) decide on a request to suspend a student's studies due to misconduct or academic reasons.
- (c) decide on a request to cancel a student's enrolment due to academic reasons.

5 Procedures

Deferment of Course Commencement

5.1 Students may apply for a deferment of their course commencement by completing the *Deferment, Suspension or Withdrawal Application Form*.

5.2 If a deferment application is approved, the student will receive a letter advising of the approval and confirming the new course dates, and the *International Student Offer and Acceptance Agreement* will be amended to reflect the new course dates. All terms and conditions of the original student acceptance agreement will remain the same.

5.3 If an international student's enrolment is deferred for any reason, AGE must notify the Department of Education and Training and the Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS.

Student-initiated Suspension of Study (Leave of Absence)

5.4 Students must advise AGE in writing by completing the *Deferment, Suspension or Withdrawal Application Form* if they wish to apply for a voluntary suspension of their studies and provide demonstrable evidence to support a student-initiated suspension.



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- 5.5 Students will be interviewed to discuss their requests.
- 5.6 Approval of a student-initiated suspension is based on the request and any evidence provided by the student.
- 5.7 Once a decision is made, the student will be advised in writing of the decision within five (5) working days of the decision.
- 5.8 Where a suspension is granted, the following tasks will be undertaken:
- (a) the relevant government departments are advised via PRISMS of the period of suspension granted for international students;
 - (b) the student's financial records are adjusted to take account of the period of suspension of studies; and
 - (c) the relevant personnel are emailed advising them that the student has suspended their study, so the student record can be updated.
- 5.9 If the request for suspension of studies is not granted, the student will be advised that they have twenty (20) working days in which to appeal the decision as set out in AGE's *Student Grievance Handling Policy and Procedure*.
- 5.10 The request for voluntary suspension of study, any accompanying evidence and a copy of the written advice to the student of the decision will be placed on the student's file.
- 5.11 If the student chooses to access AGE's grievance process, AGE will maintain the student's enrolment until the grievance process is completed and AGE will not notify the Department of Home Affairs of any change to an international student's enrolment status through PRISMS.
- 5.12 If an international student's enrolment is suspended for any reason and the student is studying on a student visa, AGE must notify the Department of Education and Training and the Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS.
- 5.13 International students must be made aware that any change to their enrolment may affect their student visa.

Student Withdrawal

- 5.14 A student may withdraw from a unit of study or a course they have enrolled in at any time during the teaching period by completing the *Deferment, Suspension or Withdrawal Application Form* and submitting it to the Student Services and Administration team.
- 5.14.1 Where a student withdraws prior to or on the Census Date this is considered a withdrawal without academic penalty.
- 5.14.2 Where a student withdraws after the Census Date, this is considered a withdrawal with academic penalty.
- 5.15 Until formal withdrawal has occurred, the student remains liable for all fees



associated with their enrolment.

- 5.16 Students will be notified of the outcome within five (5) working days from the date of receipt of the application. For international students, the notification will include that AGE will inform the relevant Government departments of the change in enrolment status.

Abandonment of Studies

- 5.17 International students who are categorised as having abandoned their studies will be issued with a notification of intention to report a change in their enrolment status to the relevant government department(s) as the student is in breach of their visa conditions.
- 5.18 The student will be advised in writing of the notification of intention to report. The student will be advised that they have ten (10) working days in which to appeal the decision through AGE's grievance handling procedures.

AGE-initiated Suspension or Cancellation of Study

- 5.19 If a decision is made to suspend a student's studies due to misconduct, AGE will write to the student informing them of the intention to suspend. The notification will include the reasons for the decision and, for international students, the intention to notify the relevant Government departments of the change in enrolment status. In addition, the student will be advised that if they wish to appeal the decision, they will have twenty (20) working days in which to access AGE's grievance handling process.
- 5.20 If a decision is made to cancel a student's studies, AGE will inform the student in writing of the intention to cancel the student's enrolment, the reason for the cancellation, and the intention to notify the relevant Government departments of the change in enrolment status.
- 5.21 In addition, where there is an opportunity for appeal regarding the cancellation, the student will be advised that if they wish to appeal the decision, they will have twenty (20) working days in which to access AGE's grievance handling process.
- 5.22 A copy of the notification letter and supporting evidence, along with the documented decision, is to be recorded and placed on the student's file.

Appeals regarding AGE-initiated Suspension or Cancellation

- 5.23 If the student chooses to access AGE's grievance process, AGE will maintain the student's enrolment until the internal grievance process is completed and will not notify the relevant Government departments of any change to an international student's enrolment status through PRISMS, except in extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student.
- 5.24 Any claim of extenuating circumstances will need to be supported by appropriate evidence. Extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student may include but are not limited to, the following. The student:
- (a) is a missing person;



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- (b) has medical concerns, severe depression or psychological issues that lead AGE to fear for the student's wellbeing;
- (c) has engaged or threatens to engage in behaviour that is reasonably believed to endanger the student or others or the student is at risk of committing a criminal offence.

5.25 Financial hardship is not considered extenuating circumstances for international students as the ability to cover tuition fees is a condition of the student visa.

5.26 The National Code 2018 does not require AGE to continue providing learning opportunities to international students throughout the twenty (20) working days allowed to appeal the decision and during the internal grievance process for international students. Based on the nature of the misconduct, AGE will decide, on a case-by-case basis, whether to allow the student to continue to attend class, make alternative study arrangements for the student, or deny the student access to study opportunities. In making such a decision, AGE will consider whether denying the student learning opportunities throughout the twenty (20) day appeal period and during the internal grievance process may disadvantage the student in their subsequent studies, should the grievance process find in their favour.

5.27 If a student chooses not to challenge the suspension of study or cancellation of their enrolment, or has unsuccessfully exhausted all internal appeal processes, the suspension of study or cancellation of enrolment will be formally processed and the relevant government departments will be notified of the change in an international student's enrolment via PRISMS. Note that AGE does not have to wait for the outcome of an external appeal before notifying the government departments of the change to the student's study status.

5.28 The following tasks will be undertaken:

- (a) the student's financial records are adjusted to take account of the period of suspension or cancellation of enrolment, if applicable;
- (b) the relevant personnel are emailed to advise that the student's studies have been suspended or their enrolment has been cancelled so that records can be updated, and the student's computer access, e-mail account and library borrowing rights are suspended until the student recommences their studies or are to remain cancelled, as applicable; and
- (c) a diary entry is made to set a reminder for when the student is due back, if applicable.

5.29 If an international student's enrolment is cancelled for any reason and the student is studying on a student visa, AGE must notify the Department of Education and Training and the Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS. The Registrar is responsible for such a notification.

5.30 International students must be made aware that any change to their enrolment may affect their student visa.



Extension of Duration of Study for International Students

5.31 Some international students who have been suspended or who have deferred their studies may require an extension to the duration to complete their course if they cannot complete the course requirements as specified in the original CoE. This may be because of the following reasons:

- (a) compassionate or compelling circumstances;
- (b) the implementation of AGE's intervention strategy has meant the student is not able to meet satisfactory course progress; or
- (c) an approved deferment or suspension of study has been granted under the National Code 2018.

5.32 Students must complete a *Course and CoE Extension Application* to apply for such an extension.

5.33 Where such an application is approved, AGE is to record this variation and the reasons for it on the student file. AGE will report the student via PRISMS and/or issue a new electronic CoE when the student can only account for the variation by extending their expected duration of study. Except in the circumstances as specified above, the expected duration of study specified in the student's electronic CoE must not exceed the CRICOS registered course duration.

6 Related Legislation and Documents

Institute Documents

- The following documents are related to this policy and procedure:

Course and CoE Extension Application Form

Course Progression Policy and Procedure

Deferment, Suspension or Withdrawal Application Form

International Student Offer and Acceptance Agreement

Student Code of Conduct and Shared Responsibility Policy and Procedure

Student Grievance Handling Policy and Procedure

Applicable External Standards and Codes

- This policy and procedure complies with the following standards and codes:

Standards/Code	Standards/Clauses
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2021L00488	Under <i>Standard 1 – Student Participation and Attainment</i> : Standard 1.1



Standards/Code	Standards/Clauses
National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017L01182	Standard 9 – Deferring, suspending or cancelling the overseas student’s enrolment

7 Feedback

- AGE staff and students may provide feedback about this document by emailing support@guildmusic.edu.au for such feedback to be incorporated into a future review.

8 Document Control

Approval Review	Details
Governing authority	Academic Board
Responsible officer	Dean
Endorsed by	Board of Directors
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