Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation of Student Enrolment - Policy & Procedure

1. Policy

1.1 This policy and procedure are implemented to support the 2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Standard 9)

1.2 The following procedures will ensure VACTS follows the required processes when either a student or VACTS, wishes to defer, suspend, or cancel/withdraw a student's enrolment.

1.3 This policy/procedure provides information on the grounds in which an International student's enrolment may be deferred, suspended, or cancelled/withdrawn.

1.4 Students can initiate deferral, suspension, or cancellation/withdrawal of their studies only in limited circumstances or may have their enrolment suspended by VACTS due to student's misconduct/misbehaviour (as defined in the Procedures below). A student enrolment may be cancelled where a serious breach of Visa or enrolment conditions has occurred.

1.5 VACTS informs students of the following:

a) Impact of deferring, suspending, or cancelling/withdrawing their enrolment and their student visa.
b) Grounds and process for deferring, suspending, cancelling or withdrawing enrolment pre and post enrolment.
c) Their right to appeal a decision VACTS to suspend or cancel their studies within 20 days of receiving notifications VACTS intention.
d) Required evidence or supporting documents that can be verified which students must submit to VACTS at the time of lodgement of their application to defer, cancel/withdraw or suspend their enrolment.

1.6 If VACTS amends a student's enrolment due to exceptional circumstances, which are mentioned in this policy, it will do so via PRISMS and records the reasons for the amendment.

1.7 VACTS will not inform the Department of Education of any variation to the enrolment status until the external complaints and appeals process has been completed, if accessed.

1.8 All records and relevant information that are exchanged between VACTS and the student, including those records in the student file will be maintained and stored in compliance with VACTS Privacy Policy and Procedures.

1.9 The **Administration Manager** is responsible in the implementation of this policy and procedures.

2. Procedure

2.1 Student Initiated Deferral, Suspension or Cancellation/Withdrawal of Enrolment

Student Initiated Deferral or Suspension

Students may be able to temporarily defer the commencement of their studies or temporarily suspend their enrolment after commencement.
VACTS is only able to temporarily defer or suspend the enrolment of the student due to exceptional circumstances on the grounds of compassionate or compelling circumstances. These circumstances could include but are not limited to:

- Serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was / is 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 student's studies; or
- 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)
- Where VACTS is unable to offer a pre-requisite unit
- Inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa.
- If an approved deferral of commencement of studies or the suspension of study has been approved in compliance with VACTS policy & procedures.

Please Note: The above are only some of examples of what may be considered compassionate or compelling circumstances. The **Admin Manager** will use their professional judgment and to assess each case on its individual merits. When determining whether compassionate or compelling circumstances exist, VACTS will consider documentary evidence provided to support the claim and should keep copies of these documents in the student's file.

- A student wishing to defer an enrolment must do so prior to the commencement of the course. Students must complete an 'Application to Defer' form and submit

to the **Student Support Officer**. This application to defer must include in detail the 'compassionate or compelling circumstances' to support the temporary deferral of the start date of their studies.

- A student wishing to temporarily suspend their studies after commencement must complete an 'Application for suspension of studies' form and submit to the **Student Support Officer**. This application for suspension of study must include (in detail) the 'compassionate or compelling circumstances' to support the temporary suspension of studies.

Student Initiated Cancellation/Withdrawal

A student may request to cancel their enrolment where they have decided to discontinue studying with VACTS.

1. Prior to completing 6 months of study in their principal course

Students wishing to transfer their enrolment prior to completing 6 months of study in their principal course must provide a letter of offer from an alternative provider along with their application form and submit it to the **Student Support Officer**.

2. After completing 6 months of study in their principal course

Students wishing to cancel/withdraw their enrolment must complete an 'Application to Withdraw' form and submit to the **Student Support Officer**.

- To process suspension, deferment, or cancellation/withdraw request further, the student must comply with the written agreement and all policies.

- The **Student Support Officer** will:
  - ❖ Review all applications for deferral or suspension and determine if the application for deferral or suspensions is to be granted or rejected within 10 working days.
  - ❖ Will maintain all documentation in relation to the deferral, suspension or cancellation/withdrawal application on the student's file
  - ❖ Notify Department of Education via PRISMS of the decision to defer or suspend a student enrolment as a result of the student's request.
  - ❖ Will ensure the student is informed in writing of the outcome of their application for deferral, suspension or cancellation/withdrawal. This written notification will also inform the student that the deferral, suspension or cancellation/withdrawal may affect their student visa and they are advised to

contact Department of Home Affairs in relation to the status of their student visa.

- In the case of a student application being rejected the written notification to the student will also be informed of their ability to access the complaints and appeals policy and procedure if they wish to appeal the decision.

Students will be required to refer to their written agreement and the Refunds Policy and Procedure for details of the refund arrangements in place where an enrolment is cancelled/withdrawn.

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2.2 Provider Initiated Deferral, Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment

Provider Initiated Deferral

VACTS may defer an enrolment where the course is not being offered at the proposed date, site, or any other reason. VACTS deems necessary to cancel the course. In such cases a refund shall be processed as required or alternative courses offered.

Provider Initiated Suspension or Cancellation

VACTS may suspend or cancel a student enrolment where they have not paid fees as documented in their written agreement or has behaved in a manner that is not appropriate for an education setting such as misbehaviour. Such actions may include but is not limited to acts of discrimination, sexual harassment, vilification or bullying, as well as acts of cheating or plagiarism. Such acts of misbehaviour will be classified into one of two categories – Academic Misconduct or General Misconduct. Where the Academic or General Misconduct is considered severe enough, VACTS has the right to cancel the student enrolment.

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Academic Misconduct

The following gives an indication to the types of behaviour that constitute 'Academic Misconduct' at VACTS.

- Students must not copy or paraphrase any document, audio-visual material, computer-based material or artistic piece from another source except in accordance with the conventions of the field of study
- Students must not use another person's concepts, results or conclusions and pass them off as their own
- In cases where the assessment task is intended to be individual work not group work, students must not prepare an assignment collaboratively and then submit work that is substantially the same as another student's assessment.
- Students must not ask another person to produce an assessable item for them.
- Students who do not meet satisfactory course requirements will be cancelled on the basis on Unsatisfactory Course Progress.

General Misconduct

General misconduct is where a student has acted in a manner that is not appropriate for an education setting.

The following examples indicate the kinds of behaviour which constitute student misconduct/misbehaviour. They are for illustrative purposes and are not intended to be exhaustive. Examples of General Misconduct may include where a student has:

- Non-payment of fees as documented in the student's written agreement.
- contravenes any rules or acts;
- prejudices the good name or reputation of VACTS;
- prejudices the good order and governance of VACTS or interferes with the freedom of other people to pursue their studies, carry out their functions or participate in the life of VACTS;
- fails to comply with conditions agreed in the contract;
- wilfully disobeys or disregards any lawful order or direction from VACTS personnel;
- refuses to identify him or herself when lawfully asked to do so by an officer VACTS;
- fails to comply with any penalty imposed for breach of discipline;
- misbehaves in a class, meeting or other activity under the control or supervision of VACTS, or on VACTS premises or other premises to which the student has access as a student of VACTS;
- obstructs any member of staff in the performance of their duties;
- acts dishonestly in relation to admission to VACTS;

- knowingly makes any false or misleading representation about things that concern the student as a student of VACTS or breaches any VACTS rules;
- alters any documents or records;
- harasses or intimidates another student, a member of staff, a visitor VACTS, or any other person while the student is engaged in study or other activity at VACTS, because of race, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, sexual preference, disability, age, political conviction, religious belief or for any other reason;
- breaches any confidence of VACTS;
- Misuses any facility in a manner which is illegal or which is or will be detrimental to the rights or property of others. This includes the misuse, in any way, of any computing or communications equipment or capacity to which the student has access at or away from VACTS premises while acting as a VACTS student, in a manner which is illegal or which is or will be detrimental to the rights or property of others;
- steals, destroys or damages a facility or property of VACTS or for which VACTS is responsible; or
- is guilty of any improper conduct

Where a student has been identified of Academic or General Misconduct the **Admin Manager** shall be informed and will make a decision on the penalty and the severity of the penalty. The **Admin Manager** may take into account the type of misconduct that has occurred and the level of misconduct that occurred when deciding penalties.

The penalties at VACTS may impose include:

- Non-payment of fees may result in suspension of studies until such time as the remaining fees are paid or cancel the enrolment where it has been determined the collection of fees will not be possible.
- Academic Misconduct could include a warning, repeating an assessment task, deemed NYC in the unit of competency, or suspension or cancellation of enrolment.
- General Misconduct may result in a warning, a charge for any costs that may have caused, request for formal apology if the action affected a third party, or suspension or cancellation of enrolment

Where a student has been identified with Academic or General Misconduct VACTS shall ensure the following:

- Students must be treated fairly, with dignity and with due regard to their privacy
- Students are to be regarded as innocent of the alleged misconduct until they have either admitted to it or been found by proper inquiry by the **Admin Manager** to have so behaved.

- Past misconduct is not evidence that a student has behaved in the same manner again.
- Each case is dealt with on its own merits and according to its own circumstances with the provision that the first instance of misconduct will be penalised more leniently than subsequent instances of misconduct.

Where a decision to suspend or cancel a student enrolment VACTS will inform the student in writing ('Letter of Student Misconduct (Suspension or Cancellation') of the following:

- The intention to suspend or cancel the student enrolment.
- That he or she has 20 working days in which to access VACTS Complaints and Appeals policy and procedure and start the process of appealing the decision to suspend or cancel the enrolment. The student enrolment will not be cancelled or suspended until after this appeal period has passed.
- Where the student enrolment is to be suspended the length of the suspension must be included.
- Where the enrolment is to be cancelled the effective date of the cancellation (at least 20 working days from the date of the letter).
- Students must also be informed that VACTS is obliged to inform Department of Education via PRISMS after the 20-day period of the suspension or cancellation and this may affect their student visa.
- Students will be advised to contact Department of Home Affairs in relation to the status of their student visa.

The **Student Support Officer** will:

- Maintain all application documentation for the suspension or cancellation of enrolment on the student's file.
- Notify Department of Education via PRISMS of the decision to suspend or cancel the enrolment as a result of the student's request only after the appeals period has passed. Where a student decides to access the complaints and appeals policy and procedure within 20 working days, the student must not be reported until the process has finished.

2.3 Default Notifications

Any provider or student cancellation must be reported by the **Student Support Officer** as follows:

A. Provider Default within 3 business days of the default occurring and the outcome of the discharge of VACTS's obligation within 7 days after the end of VACTS

obligation period (VACTS's obligation period is 10 business days after the day of the default).

B. Student Default within 5 business days of the default occurring and the outcome of the discharge of VACTS's obligation within 7 days after the end of VACTS obligation period.

Additionally, VACTS must report the outcome of the provider or student default within 10 working days of the end of the default period, i.e. report whether the student took the offer of an alternative course or a refund, and, if a refund, how much was paid.

All default notifications and reporting is to be completed through PRISMS by the Administration Manager using the following guide as per the link below.
https://prisms.education.gov.au/Logon/Logon.aspx

3. Related documents/forms

Forms

- Application for Deferral Form
- Application for Withdraw Form
- Application for Suspension Form

Handbooks, manuals or other documents

- Student Handbook

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4. References

ESOS Act 2000 - National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018

Standard 9: Deferring, suspending or cancelling the overseas student's enrolment:

This standard sets out that registered providers must appropriately manage the enrolment of their overseas students and ensure all necessary information about enrolments has been provided to the relevant government department by maintaining updated information in the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) database.

2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) :

Outcome Standards for NVR RTOs,

- **Standard 2.1:** VET students have access to clear and accurate information concerning the organisation, the relevant training product, and students are made aware of any changes that may affect them.
- **Standard 2.2:** VET students are advised, prior to enrolment, about the suitability of the training product for them, taking into account the student's skills and competencies.