



Deferment or Suspension of Enrolment by a Student

Policy

Under certain limited circumstances, a student's enrolment may be deferred or temporarily suspended at the instigation of the student.

Deferment means to delay the commencement of a course. Suspension of enrolment means to temporarily put studies on hold (i.e. adjourn, delay, postpone).

Procedures

Deferment or suspension of enrolment by a student

Learners who wish to defer or temporarily suspend their enrolment can apply to do so only if the course in which they were enrolled is unavailable, their visa is delayed or there are compassionate or compelling circumstances (as defined in the Compassionate or Compelling Circumstances Policy).

Supporting Documents

Supporting documents must be provided by a student to support an application for deferment, suspension or cancellation. Supporting documents include medical certificates, death certificates, police reports, psychologists' reports and any other relevant documents.

Supporting documents must be original documents or certified copies of original documents.

Student application for deferment prior to commencement

A request by a student for a deferment prior to course commencement must be made using the application for deferment, suspension or cancellation of enrolment. The application must be addressed to the Student Services Manager. The application must be accompanied by supporting documents. When the application is processed, and if a deferment is granted, the student will receive a revised offer of enrolment (a revised Enrolment Offer and Acceptance Agreement) and a revised CoE.

Notifying a student of the outcome of an application for deferment prior to enrolment

An applicant for deferment prior to commencement will have written notification of the result of the application available within 10 working days of lodgement of the application.

The student will be notified of the outcome of the application for deferment by use of either the:

- "notice of approval for deferment, suspension or cancellation of enrolment", or the
- "notice of rejection of application for deferment, suspension or cancellation of enrolment".

Student application for suspension

A request for temporary suspension of enrolment must be made using the application for deferment, suspension or cancellation of enrolment. The application must be addressed to the Student Services Manager. The application must be accompanied by supporting documents.

An application for suspension must be submitted at least 10 working days before the date of the requested suspension. A student may request a suspension of up to six months.

Notifying a student of the outcome of an application for suspension of enrolment

An applicant for a suspension of enrolment will have written notification of the result of the application available within 10 working days of lodgement of the application.

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The student will be notified of the outcome of the application for suspension by use of either the:

- "notice of approval for deferment, suspension or cancellation of enrolment", or the
- "notice of rejection of application for deferment, suspension or cancellation of enrolment".

Assessing a student application for deferment or temporary suspension of enrolment

Each application made by a student for deferment or temporary suspension of enrolment will be considered by the VACTS Management Committee. The VACTS Management Committee will consider the documents provided by the student in support of the application and, in the case of a request for suspension, seek to interview the student. The VACTS Management Committee may request input from the Student Welfare Officer, the RTO Manager or delegated trainer/assessor, or any other member of staff in assessing a student's application for deferment or suspension. In the case of an application for temporary suspension, the VACTS Management Committee may refer to external support services to which the student has been previously referred. In any such case, the confidentiality of the student will be maintained. Minutes of all meetings of the VACTS Management Committee will be taken by the Student Services Manager or a delegated staff member.

Application for a suspension which would cause the duration of a course to be longer than that specified on the CoE

If a temporary suspension of enrolment for which a student is applying would cause the duration of a course to be longer than that specified on the CoE, the student must also make an application for course extension. (Please refer to the Completion within Expected Duration policy). The student will be assisted with this by the Student Services Manager. In this instance, if the application for a suspension is approved, the application for course extension will also be approved. The student will be advised to check with the nearest DIBP office for information about the impact of the extension of the course duration on the student's visa.

Outcomes for the student's Confirmation of Enrolment

There are three possible outcomes for the CoE of a student who has requested and been granted a deferment or suspension of enrolment.

Deferment or suspension without affecting the end date of the CoE

In this case, VACTS notifies DOE through PRISMS that it is deferring or suspending a student's enrolment for a period without affecting the end date of the CoE. In this case, there is no change to the CoE or the student's enrolment status on PRISMS. The student's CoE status will still be listed as "studying". The notice of deferment or suspension will, however, be recorded in PRISMS and sent to DIBP. This information will be kept by DIBP for future reference.

Deferment or suspension which affects the end date of the CoE

In this case, VACTS notifies DOE through PRISMS that it is deferring or suspending a student's enrolment for a period which will affect the end date of the CoE. In such situations, PRISMS will cancel the original CoE and immediately offer VACTS the opportunity to create a new CoE with a more appropriate end date. If VACTS does not know when the student will return, the PEO will choose to not create a new CoE at this point, but to wait to issue the new CoE until the student has provided notification of the intended date of return.

Advice to contact DIBP

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Learners applying for deferment or temporary suspension of enrolment are advised to refer to the DIBP website (www.immi.gov.au) or helpline (131 881) for information, and the local DIBP office for advice, on how the potential change to enrolment status may impact upon his or her visa.

Register of applications to defer, suspend or cancel enrolment

Details of applications for deferment or temporary suspension are recorded in the register of applications to defer, suspend or cancel enrolment. This register is maintained by the Student Services Manager.

The register of applications to defer, suspend or cancel enrolment records the student name and number, the course in which the student is enrolled, the reasons for the application, information about the supporting documentation provided by the student, and the reasons the application was accepted or rejected. Each entry in the register is signed by the Student Services Manager. This register is considered by each meeting of the VACTS Management Committee as part of the continuous improvement process.

Documents to be filed

All documentation about the deferment or temporary suspension granted to a student is filed in the student's file

The following documents will be kept in the file of a student who has applied to defer or suspend enrolment.

- the application for deferment or suspension of enrolment
- if the application was approved, a copy of the application for deferment or suspension approval form
- if the application was rejected, a copy of the application for deferment or suspension rejection form
- copies of all documents tendered in support of the application.

Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment by VACTS

Policy

Under certain limited circumstances, a student's enrolment may be deferred, suspended or cancelled by VACTS.

Deferment means to delay the commencement of a course.

Suspension means the temporary postponement of enrolment during a course.

Cancellation means termination of enrolment in a course.

Procedures

Deferments, suspensions or cancellations by VACTS

Under certain circumstances, VACTS may initiate the deferment, suspension or cancellation of a student's enrolment.

Deferment

VACTS may defer the commencement of a course if the course is not offered. Should this occur, learners enrolled in the course will be offered a refund of all the course money they have paid to

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date. The refund will be paid within two (2) weeks of the day on which the course ceased being provided. Alternatively, such learners may be offered enrolment in an alternative course by VACTS at no extra cost to the student. Learners have the right to choose whether they would prefer a full refund of course fees, or to accept a place in another course. If they choose placement in another course, VACTS will ask them to sign a document to indicate that they accept the placement.

If VACTS is unable to provide a refund or place a student in an alternative course, the Tuition Protection Scheme will provide assistance to the student in obtaining a place in a suitable alternative course.

Suspension

VACTS may temporarily suspend a student's enrolment if the student's behaviour is assessed as unacceptable for an educational setting. The VACTS Management Committee is responsible for making this assessment. This is referred to as suspension of enrolment due to misbehaviour.

Grounds for suspending a student for misbehaviour

VACTS may suspend the enrolment of a student due to misbehaviour if the student:

- has been in breach of the VACTS Student Code of Conduct
- is assessed by the CEO as providing a threat to the well-being of other learners or staff
- has being assessed as behaving in a way such as to constitute serious misconduct

Applicants are advised of each of these grounds for suspension due to misbehaviour prior to signing the Enrolment Offer and Acceptance Agreement.

Outcomes for the student's Confirmation of Enrolment

There are three possible outcomes for the CoE of a student whose enrolment has been deferred or suspended by VACTS.

Deferral or suspension without affecting the end date of the CoE

In this case, VACTS notifies DOE through PRISMS that it is deferring or suspending a student's enrolment for a period without affecting the end date of the CoE. In this case, there is no change to the CoE or the student's enrolment status on PRISMS. The student's CoE status will still be listed as "studying". The notice of deferral or suspension will, however, be recorded in PRISMS and sent to DIBP. This information will be kept by DIBP for future reference.

Deferral or suspension which affects the end date of the CoE

In this case, VACTS notifies DOE through PRISMS that it is deferring or suspending a student's enrolment for a period which will affect the end date of the CoE. In such situations, PRISMS will cancel the original CoE and immediately offer VACTS the opportunity to create a new CoE with a more appropriate end date. If VACTS does not know when the student will return, the PEO will choose to not create a new CoE at this point, but to wait to issue the new CoE until the student has provided notification of the intended date of return.

Advice to contact DIBP

Learners whose enrolment is to be suspended by VACTS are advised to refer to the DIBP website (www.immi.gov.au) or helpline (131 881) for information, and the local DIBP office for advice, on how the potential change to enrolment status may impact upon his or her visa.

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Cancellation

VACTS may cancel the enrolment of a student if the student:

- is in breach of a condition of ongoing enrolment, including:
 - the requirement to attend at least 80% of all scheduled classes every study period
 - the requirement to not plagiarise, collude or cheat
 - the requirement to pay agreed tuition fees by the dates agreed in the Enrolment Offer and Acceptance Agreement
- has been in breach of the VACTS Student Code of Conduct
- is assessed by the CEO as providing a threat to the well-being of other learners or staff
- has being assessed as behaving in a way such as to constitute serious misconduct
- fails to meet the requirements of the course progress policy
- fails to pay tuition fees

Applicants are advised of each of these grounds for deferment, suspension or cancellation prior to signing the Enrolment Offer and Acceptance Agreement.

Notice of intention to defer, suspend or cancel enrolment

Where a deferment, suspension or cancellation is initiated by VACTS, the student will receive a notice of intention to defer, suspend or cancel enrolment.

Appealing against VACTS's intention to suspend or cancel enrolment

A notice of intention to defer, suspend or cancel enrolment will clearly identify that the student receiving the notice will be given 20 working days to access VACTS's internal complaints and appeals process. The 20 working days begins from a date specified in the letter which allows for reasonable time for delivery of the letter. Notices of intention to defer, suspend or cancel enrolment are sent by registered mail to the address on the student's file and by email to the email address on the student's file.

Contacting the student within the 20 working days available to appeal

If no appeal is received, then the Student Services Manager is responsible for contacting the student on the 19th working day following the date specified in the letter in order to provide the student with a final opportunity to lodge an internal appeal. Contact will be made by telephone and email.

For more information, please refer to the VACTS Complaints and Appeals Policy.

Maintaining enrolment in the case of an appeal

If an appeal against a deferment, suspension or cancellation by VACTS is lodged by the student, VACTS will maintain the student's enrolment until the internal appeals process is complete, unless there are extenuating circumstances relating to the student's welfare.

Extenuating circumstances relating to the student's welfare

Extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student may include, but are not limited to, the following. The student:

- is missing
- has medical concerns, severe depression or psychological issues which lead VACTS to fear for the student's wellbeing

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- has engaged, or threatens to engage in behaviour that is reasonably believed to endanger the student or others
- is at risk of committing a criminal offence

The Student Services Manager is responsible for ensuring that claims by VACTS of extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student are supported by appropriate evidence. All such documentary evidence is filed in the student's file.

Reserving the right to not provide learning opportunities

VACTS reserves the right to not provide learning opportunities during throughout the 20 working days provided to a student to make an appeal and throughout the appeals process should it be deemed appropriate. The CEO is responsible for making this determination.

The suspension or cancellation will be notified to DOE on completion of the 20 working days if there is no appeal, or at the completion of the appeals process if there is an appeal and the appeal is not upheld, or if there is an appeal and the appeal is withdrawn.

Opportunity for external appeal

A student may choose to appeal against a decision with the Overseas Students Ombudsman, but VACTS is not required to wait for the outcome of an external appeal before notifying DOE of the change to the student's enrolment status. Learners will be provided with counselling and advice about external appeal opportunities. This counselling and advice will be free of any additional fee for the student.

A student wishing to access an external appeals process must contact DIBP and provide evidence of having accessed an external appeals process within 28 days of VACTS notifying DOE of the cancellation of enrolment. DIBP will then consider the student's individual circumstances and whether to cancel or maintain the student's visa.

Notice of suspension or cancellation

If there is no appeal against a decision by VACTS to suspend or cancel a student's enrolment, or an appeal is lodged and the outcome supports VACTS's intention to suspend or cancel the student's enrolment, or an appeal lodged and then withdrawn, VACTS will issue a notice of deferment, suspension or cancellation. The notice of deferment, suspension or cancellation will indicate that the deferment, suspension or cancellation is to be initiated.

The Student Services Manager is responsible for ensuring that the notice of intention to defer, suspend or cancel enrolment is attached to the notice of deferment, suspension or cancellation of enrolment and provided to the CEO. The CEO will then authorise the necessary changes to the student's enrolment details in the student database and PRISMS.

Filing documents

All documentation about the deferment or temporary suspension, cancellation by VACTS of a student's enrolment are filed in the student's file.