



**EXCELSIA
COLLEGE**
— Sydney —

Objects of Excelsia College

Motivated by the Christian faith, as expressed by the Apostles' Creed and Nicene Creed, with fidelity to the Scriptures as the Word of God, the Objects of the College are the advancement of the Christian faith and higher education.

Document Number

PO-STU-17

Document Name

**OVERSEAS STUDENT ENROLMENT VARIATION, SUSPENSION AND
CANCELLATION POLICY**

Document Status

Owner	Chief Strategy Officer and Academic Registrar	14 August 2012
Approving Authority	Management Committee	29 August 2012
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ABN: 50 360 319 774 CRICOS Provider Code: 002664K

1 Policy Statement

This policy sets out the limited circumstances in which Excelsia College may permit overseas students to vary their study progression, including deferral, leave of absence and reduced study load. It also addresses the regulations governing suspension or cancellation of enrolment. It complies with the *National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018* ([National Code](#)), which is made under, and forms part of the *Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000*.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all overseas students who have accepted the offer of a place at Excelsia College, and to all Excelsia College staff responsible for education services to overseas students.

3 Responsibility

The following members of staff are responsible for actions under this policy, ensuring that all actions are made in accordance with the conditions and guidelines of this policy and any related legislation:

- **Registrar's Office:** Responsible for processing all applications of leave of absence, reduced study load, withdrawal, suspension and cancellation of enrolment. Registrar staff are also responsible for answering queries by students who need assistance with the application process for anything outlined within this policy.
 - **Compliance Officer:** Responsible for processing student suspensions and cancellations of enrolment.
 - **Admissions:** Responsible for processing applications for deferral of enrolment.
 - **Head of School:** Responsible for assisting with the process of any application where the Registrar's Office or Admissions require clarification or further information in order to assess a student's application and make a decision.
 - **Student Support:** Responsible for assessing appeals where the application has been made on the basis of medical grounds (including mental health).
 - **Students:** Responsible for providing all necessary supporting evidence with any application outlined below and cooperating with any further requests for evidence as required by staff to make a fair assessment.
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4 Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- **Overseas students** are international students that include both offshore and onshore students. This refers to all students who are not Australian citizens or permanent residents.

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- **Deferral of enrolment** is a delay in the commencement of study in which a student has sought and received permission to start the award course either one semester or one year after the semester in which the place was offered.
- **Leave of absence** is an approved temporary suspension of studies in which a student has sought and received permission to take a break from study. Leave of absence is normally approved for one semester. Students can apply for additional leave beyond this but only in exceptional circumstances.
- **Reduced study load** is any reduction in study from the student's initial study load that applies when a student is accepted into a course. For example, for a full-time student, this means any request to study less than 24 credit points in a given semester.
- **Suspension of enrolment** is initiated by Excelsia College. Reasons for suspending a student's enrolment include non-payment of fees, misconduct, non-attendance of classes or engagement with online studies, failure of assessment, or failure to enrol in units.
- **Cancellation of enrolment** indicates a cessation of studies in the course. It may be initiated by the student or Excelsia College. When initiated by the student, cancellation of enrolment in the course is usually referred to at Excelsia College as **withdrawal**.

5 Application of the Policy

The following outlines the requirements and conditions for each type of enrolment variation. In all cases where overseas students are making any such application as outlined below, it is a strict requirement of this policy that students **must** apply using the relevant official application form found online in ExO and the College website. Any requests made via email or otherwise **will not be considered**.

5.1 Deferral

Overseas students, who have had their visa approved and arrived on campus, who wish to defer the commencement of their studies must apply to Admissions using the **Deferral Request Form**. To qualify for a deferral, students must not have begun their studies by either attending classes or engaging in any activities online. Deferral of the commencement of studies by overseas students is permitted only on the grounds of compassionate or compelling circumstances. Students will be required to provide evidence of the compassionate or compelling circumstances, as follows.

- a. Medical certificates provided as evidence must:
 - be issued by a registered specialist doctor
 - state that the student has a medical condition and is unfit for class
 - state the length of time the student will be unfit for studies
 - include the doctor's contact details.

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- b. Death certificates provided as evidence must be certified and translated into English if applicable.
- c. Evidence of an upheaval or disaster must be within reasonable proximity to the student's family.
- d. Evidence of a traumatic experience must include a police report or report from a psychologist or qualified professional and must include the contact details of the writer.

In cases of mental health, the student must provide evidence of counselling and/or psychiatric treatment. This evidence must show that the student is receiving ongoing treatment for their illness. It should also show how and when this treatment plan will enable the student to resume full studies, otherwise a new Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) cannot be issued.

Excelsia College must inform the student that deferring their enrolment may affect their student visa. As required under Section 19 of the *ESOS Act 2000*, the Registrar must notify the Department of Home Affairs and the Department of Education, via PRISMS, where the student's enrolment is deferred, and keep complete records in the student's file.

5.2 Withdrawal

Overseas students may cancel their enrolment by withdrawing at any time using the online Course Withdrawal Form. Students should refer to the [Student Tuition Fees Refund Policy](#) for information regarding the payment of refunds of prepaid tuition fees to overseas students. Withdrawals made after census date will incur full liability of all enrolled units.

5.3 Leave of Absence and Reduced Study Load

Students are entitled to 12 months leave of absence for courses more than two years in length. For courses two years or less, the maximum leave permissible is six months. Students wishing to apply for a leave of absence from study (suspension of studies) or a reduced study load must have successfully completed at least one full-time semester of study and be of good academic standing. They should apply using the [Leave of Absence \(Suspension of Studies\) Request Form](#) or the [Reduced Study Load Request Form](#). **Requests made via email will not be accepted and the College takes no responsibility for any failure to reply to such requests.** Excelsia College can only approve applications requested by an overseas student on the grounds of compassionate or compelling circumstances. Students will be required to provide evidence of the compassionate or compelling circumstances as follows.

- a. Medical certificates provided as evidence must:
 - be issued by a registered specialist doctor
 - state that the student has a medical condition and is unfit for class
 - state the length of time the student will be unfit for studies
 - include the doctor's contact details.

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- b. Death certificates provided as evidence must be certified and translated into English if applicable.
- c. Evidence of an upheaval or disaster must be within reasonable proximity to the student's family.
- d. Evidence of a traumatic experience must include a police report or report from a psychologist or qualified professional, and must include the contact details of the writer.

Note: Research students may be declined leave or a reduced study load based on additional factors that may make it impossible for students to return to or prolong their research study, or if it is found that any such request will significantly disadvantage their ability to successfully complete the course. This may include consideration of aspects such as the availability of adequate supervisors, maintenance of adequate course progression, or the currency of their research. In situations where either of these cannot be guaranteed, continuation of candidature may not be possible and therefore their request cannot be granted.

In cases of mental health, the student must provide evidence of counselling and/or mental health treatment. This evidence must show that the student is receiving ongoing treatment for their illness. It should also show how this treatment plan will help enable the student to resume full studies, otherwise a new CoE may not be able to be issued until such time that they can provide medical evidence clearing them to return to study.

Students must maintain enrolment in a full-time study load at all times until they receive confirmation that their request has been approved. Failure to do so means that they are in violation of the student visa conditions.

Where students have paid their tuition upfront prior to their application being approved, and where their application is provided in full with all necessary evidence before census date, tuition fees will not be refunded. Instead, fees will be credited to the student's account to be used in their next semester of study. For students who withdraw from their course after taking leave of absence, the Student Tuition Fees Refund Policy will be applied and their leave of absence date will be considered as the student's end of study.

If approved, leave of absence is initially approved for one semester (6 months). Excelsia College must inform the student that any leave of absence may affect their student visa. As required under Section 19 of the *ESOS Act 2000*, the Registrar must notify Department of Home Affairs and the Department of Education, via PRISMS, where leave of absence has been approved, and keep complete records in the student's file. In cases of approval for overseas students, a new CoE will only be issued when evidence can be provided of a time when they are fit and able to resume their studies.

5.4 Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment

Excelsia College must inform the student of its intention to suspend or cancel the student's enrolment and notify the student that they have 20 working days to appeal this decision through Excelsia College's [Student Grievance Policy and Procedures](#).

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Reasons for suspending or cancelling a student's enrolment include:

- a. non-payment of fees
- b. unsatisfactory course progress ([Academic Progress Monitoring and Intervention Policy](#))
- c. academic misconduct ([Academic Integrity Policy](#))
- d. misconduct ([Student Code of Conduct](#)).

Students should refer to the above policy documents for information about the consequences of misconduct and the responsibilities of staff and students in these matters.

Furthermore, Excelsia College reserves the right to cancel the enrolment of any overseas student who it feels is not making a genuine attempt to complete their course. This includes, but is not limited to, cases where students do not attend classes in all or the majority of their units, who do not regularly engage in online learning where units are delivered partially or fully online, or who fail to submit assessment tasks or other assigned work on a regular basis. In such cases, students will be asked to show cause as to why their enrolment should be maintained. Students who are unable to show cause within 10 working days will have their enrolment cancelled.

Excelsia College may also cancel a student's enrolment if they fail to maintain their unit enrolment after a scheduled student break period. Excelsia College considers this to be a cancellation of an enrolment initiated by the student. Reasonable steps will be taken by the College to locate or contact the student to confirm reasons for failure to return. In such circumstances, the College is not required to provide the student with 20 working days to appeal.

As required under Section 19 of the *ESOS Act 2000*, the Registrar must notify the Department of Home Affairs and the Department of Education, via PRISMS, of suspension or cancellation of an overseas student's enrolment.

Overseas students have the right to appeal a decision to suspend or cancel their enrolment, unless in special circumstances outlined above. Excelsia College will not notify the Department of Education of a change to the enrolment status of the student until the student grievance process is completed.

6 Related Documents and References

[Course Withdrawal Form](#)

[Leave of Absence \(Suspension of Studies\) Request Form](#)

[Reduced Study Load Request Form](#)

[Student Deferral Request Form](#)

[Student Tuition Fees Refund Policy](#)

[Student Grievance Policy and Procedure](#)

[Academic Progress Monitoring and Intervention Policy](#)

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[Academic Integrity Policy](#)

[Student Code of Conduct](#)

[Student Workload Policy](#)

7 Mapped to HESF

The content of this policy is mapped to the HESF Domains as follows:

Standard 1.1: Admission

Standard 1.3: Orientation and Progression

Standard 7.2: Information for Prospective and Current Students

8 Document History

This policy has been amended as follows:

Version	Amendments / Date / Notes
Version 7	<p>October 2020:</p> <p>Changes to definitions of key terms, including leave of absence, reduced study load, and deferral.</p> <p>Addition to section of Leave of Absence or Reduced Study Load to include 'Requests made via email will not be accepted and the College takes no responsibility for any failure to reply to such requests.'</p> <p>Additional criteria added to form the definition of what constitutes a non-genuine student to include students 'who do not regularly engage in online learning where units are delivered partially or fully online'.</p> <p>Addition and update of related documents to include all relevant forms and procedures.</p>
Version 8	<p>August 2022:</p> <p>Clarification provided regarding how tuition fees are processed for students paying upfront and later applying for Leave of Absence or Reduced Study Load.</p> <p>Clarification on the maximum amount of leave of absence entitled for students, consistent with student handbook.</p>

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