

Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation of Student Enrolment policy

Name of Policy:	Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation of Student Enrolment policy
Applicability:	All Northwest Staff and Students
Contact Person:	Admissions Manager
Original Issue date:	11 November 2012
Current Version approval:	Jan 2020
Next review:	Jan 2021
Related policies and documents:	Attendance policy Assessment policy Academic progress policy Completion within expected duration of study policy Student Enrolment policy Transfer between providers policy Complaints and Appeals policy Fees & Refund Policy Students' Handbook
RTO:	91781
CRICOS Provider Number:	03256G

1. POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 Northwest is committed to comply with the requirements of the National Code 2018 (Standard 9) Deferring, Suspending or Cancelling Student's Enrolment.

1.2 The purpose of this policy is to provide students with Northwest requirements where enrolment is deferred, suspended or cancelled.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 The CEO is responsible for the implementation of this policy, and to ensure that staff and students are aware of its application, and that staff implement requirements.

2.2 The Admissions Manager is responsible for assessing and processing requests for Deferral, Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment, and the subsequent notification of action to students in accordance with this policy.

2.3 This policy applies to all students enrolled in all courses offered by Northwest.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 Study period - A discrete period of study within a course, namely one term.

3.2 Compulsory study period - A compulsory study period is one in which the student must enroll unless granted a deferment or suspension from enrolment or leave of absence under National Code Standard 13 (Deferring, suspending or cancelling student enrolment). A compulsory study period does not include periods in which the student can elect to undertake additional studies.

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- 3.3 **Course progress** - International students are required to meet the academic progress requirements to comply with their visa conditions.
- 3.4 **CRICOS** - The Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students as prescribed by the ESOS Act.
- 3.5 **Online learning** - Study in which the trainer and international student communicate mainly through electronic technologies.
- 3.6 **Distance learning** - Distance learning study relates to a situation in which the trainer and international student are separated in time or space throughout the duration of the unit of study. Distance learning can be online learning in that the study may be undertaken through the E-learning System or through written correspondence and exchange of hard copy materials.
- 3.7 **Expected duration of course** - Amount of time (weeks, months or years) the registered provider has registered on the CRICOS register for the course to be successfully completed.
- 3.8 **PRISMS** - The Provider Registration and International Student Management System. This is an electronic database used to process information about international students, courses and registered providers to the Secretary of DEEWR.
- 3.9 **Unit of Competency (UOC)** - A component of study within a course; the term may be referred as a unit or a 'subject' studied within a course.
- 3.10 **Confirmation of Enrolment (COE)** –A document, provided electronically, which is issued by the registered provider to intending international students. It confirms the international student's eligibility to enrol in the particular course of the registered provider.
- 3.11 **Special Program** - units that have not been completed and are not delivered according to the regular course schedule must be completed and in what timeframe.
- 3.12 **Deferment** - To temporarily adjourn, delay or postpone studies. Students need to provide appropriate evidence.
- 3.13 **Medically Unfit to Travel**- A medical certificate stating that student is unable to travel.
- 3.14 **Valid return airfare** – An airfare ticket showing departure date no more than 28 days from deferral date, and return arrival details.
- 3.15 **DoHA** – Department of Home Affairs (former DIBP - Department of Immigration and Border Protection)
- 3.16 **Letter of Release** – Required if the student has not completed 6 months of their principal course of study, and would like to transfer to another provider.
- 3.17 **Principal Course** – Refers to the main course of study to be undertaken by an international student where a student has applied for multiple courses. The principal course of study is the final course for which student visa has been issued.
- 3.18 **Cancellation of Enrolment** – To permanently terminate a student's enrolment.
- 3.19 **Suspension** – To temporarily disallow a student entry to studies, premises or services.
- 3.20 **Expulsion** – To permanently disallow a student entry to studies.
- 3.21 **Special Leave (Absence)** - a period of absence, usually no more than 4 weeks.
- 3.22 **Compassionate and / or Compelling Circumstances:**
This means unusual, exceptional or compelling circumstances that are not part of daily life experience the following are grounds that must be strictly addressed with appropriate documented evidence and may include:
- Serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student is unable to attend classes for a significant period of time

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- If illness is psychological – must provide a psychologists report
- Bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents
- Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel
- A traumatic experience which could include involvement in, or witnessing a serious accident; and witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime.

3.23 Extenuating circumstances:

This relates to student welfare and may include but is not limited to:

- Refusing to maintain approved care arrangements
- Is missing
- Severe depression or psychological issues which lead to provider concern for students wellbeing
- 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
- Any claim of extenuating circumstances will need to be supported by appropriate evidence.

4. COMPLETION WITHIN THE EXPECTED DURATION OF STUDY

4.1 Compulsory study period monitoring

4.1.1 A fulltime student is scheduled 20 hours attendance per week. Students must be enrolled as per the training requirements within each study period (a term of 9 weeks) unless granted a deferment or suspension from enrolment; or special leave of absence. NORTHWEST will monitor and review a student’s enrolment and progress against their COE during and at the end of each study period. NORTHWEST will report students to the Department of Education via PRISMS if they do not complete their course by the expected completion date.

4.2 Online learning

4.2.1 International students studying at NORTHWEST will not be enrolled exclusively in distance or online learning units in any compulsory study period while in Australia. However, international students are eligible to undertake up to 25% of their studies in a distance or online components (Standard 8 of The National Code 2018). The online distance learning component of a unit of competency is prescribed in the unit assessment plan for each unit, and specified as a task to be completed weekly.

4.3 Variation to enrolment

4.3.1 NORTHWEST will record a variation in the student’s study load which may affect their expected duration of study in accordance with point 4.5 of this policy. The reasons for a variation to a student’s course completion date will be recorded in the student’s file. Should variation to a student’s expected duration of study occur, NORTHWEST will report change of the student’s COE via PRISMS and/or will be issued a new COE.

4.4 Student Change of Course

4.4.1 A student is required to complete a Change of Course Application Form and make an appointment with the Admissions Manager to obtain approval for a change of course. NORTHWEST will notify the DoHA via PRISMS about a change of course and issue a new electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (COE) for the new course.

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4.4.2 Students are also notified of any:

- fee adjustments required pertaining to the new course and any change in total current course fee
- payment required for the new course before any COE or other documentation such as certification is issued, prior to issue.
- Special Program in which units that have not been completed and are not delivered according to the regular course schedule must be completed and in what timeframe.

4.5 **Expected duration of study**

4.5.1 The expected duration of study specified in the student’s eCOE should not exceed the CRICOS registered course duration, except in the circumstances specified in this policy.

4.5.2 If a student is in the last study period of a course, with only one subject to complete the course, the student must not study this unit online or by distance education in Australia. NORTWEST will not approve any application for this provision.

4.5.3 NORTWEST has a responsibility to monitor the units that a student must study to complete the course. Where a student’s enrolment has changed or been interrupted a Special Program will be created so that the student completes the expected units within the duration of the CoE. The Academic Manager is responsible for creating the Special Program.

4.6 **Extended duration of study**

4.6.1 NORTWEST may only extend the duration of the student’s period of study where it is evident that the student will not complete the course within the expected duration, as specified on the student’s COE, under certain circumstances. An extension to the duration of a student’s course must be notified in PRISMS and if necessary a new COE issued. A duration of study may only be extended under limited circumstances which could include:

4.6.2 Compassionate or compelling circumstances such as those outlined in Definitions above

4.6.3 NORTWEST implemented an intervention strategy as necessary for students deemed ‘At Risk’ of unsatisfactory academic progress or non-attendance as outlined in the Attendance policy and Academic progress policy.

4.6.4 An approved deferment or suspension of study has been granted in accordance with the NORTWEST policy on Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation Policy.

4.6.5 Where NORTWEST was unable to offer course unit/s; or

4.6.6 Inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa.

5. **DEFERMENT**

5.1 A student must apply for deferment in writing using the online request form and submit the completed document with all supporting documentation attached, or the request may be declined. International students should check with DOHA on how the potential change to enrolment status may affect their visa. The application must provide compassionate and compelling reasons and evidence for the application to be considered by Northwest for international students.

5.2 Northwest will assess the request based on the information provided and if needed, arrange a meeting with the student.

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5.3 The Administration Manager and the Academic Manager will assess the potential impact on the applicant’s academic progress and provide their recommendation for the period of deferral.

5.4 Northwest will not approve applications if any fees or payments are outstanding. Compassionate and compelling circumstances may be considered at the discretion of Northwest. This policy provides some examples above.

5.5 If the request is approved, Northwest will advise the student in writing and the student will be advised to seek information about the potential impact on their studies from DOHA.

5.6 For requests not approved, the student will be advised that they have access to the Complaints and Appeals policy.

5.7 For international students, if the CoE end date is affected, the student should nominate a date of return and provide a copy of a return airline ticket and additional evidence.

5.8 Should an approved student request an early return to class, discretion rests with Northwest whether this will be allowed.

5.9 For international students if the CoE end date is not affected, the student is informed in writing of the outcome.

5.10 International students should refer to the DOHA website or helpline 131 881, or visit a local office for advice on how the potential change to enrolment status may impact on their visa.

5.11 Northwest will update the student status and enrolment information on the student file. For international students if the end date on the CoE is affected, a course variation will be submitted against the student’s CoE on PRISMS and a new CoE will be created.

5.12 All documents will then be placed on the student’s file.

5.13 Northwest maintains a record of the student’s expected date of return. If a student has not returned by the expected date Northwest will commence procedures to recommend cancellation of enrolment.

5.14 Fees and Charges relating to cancellation by student

- i. In the event of a student’s successful application for a course deferment, course fees and charges remain due on the scheduled dates.
- ii. Students who apply for deferment and are approved are still required to pay the full fees prior to the course commencement and granting deferral is conditional on this. Students are also required to pay the term fees at the due date as per the agreement at the due dates unless Northwest nominates otherwise. Should a student cancel or withdraw their enrolment whilst on deferment a non refundable fee applies and may be deducted from fees paid.
- iii. Further to the above, students should consult the Fees and Refunds policy for fees and charges.

6. SUSPENSION

6.1 All misconduct issues are reported to the Student Support Officer, (the SSO), by students and staff. The incident may be referred to the Academic Manager. Northwest will consult and recommend appropriate action, which may include suspension, behavioural contract, intervention and monitoring contract or arrangements covered by student misconduct policies and processes.

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6.2 Suspension due to misconduct or misbehaviour by a student is initiated by Northwest as per our policies. The Student Support Officer will coordinate the process and strategies related to the suspension.

6.3 The SSO or applicant will complete, with the student where possible, a suspension document.

6.4 The length of the exclusion will be determined by the SSO and Academic Manager taking into consideration student’s continued access to educational programs, progress and assessments.

6.5 The student is expected to adhere to the terms of the suspension and/or intervention monitoring contract. Failure to do so may result in the student triggering the expulsion process.

6.6 Students are to maintain regular contact with Northwest during suspension. Varied study plans arrangements may be put in place. Administration will maintain a record of students not in class during the period of the suspension.

6.7 Northwest will ensure that attendance records will reflect “suspended” for the period of the suspension and will not be counted in determining the percentages of student current and projected attendance.

6.8 Where the student is not satisfied with the decision to suspend, the student may appeal the decision as per the complaints and appeals policy and the conditions outlined in this policy.

6.9 A copy of all documentation is placed on the student file and PRISMS updated for changes where the internal appeal process has been finalised.

7. SPECIAL LEAVE

7.1 What is a Special leave?

Special leave is an approved period taken by a student for a maximum of 4 weeks. A student may be granted leave of absence for personal, compassionate or other compelling circumstances. Students wishing to take a leave for more than 4 weeks up to 6 months will have to apply for deferment.

7.2 Applying for Special leave

- Students are to complete the application in writing on the online request form and attach evidence of the compassionate and compelling circumstances in a single application. The application form is available online at the Northwest website.
- Northwest will consider the application and advise the student of the outcome. Where a student is dissatisfied with the decision, they have the right to appeal as per the Complaints and Appeals policy.
- If special leave is granted the student is required to meet academic progress requirements and completion within expected duration covered by related policies. Northwest will consider the application based on the implications of policies on the application. If approved a copy of all documents are maintained on the student file. Attendance during special leave will not be counted in determining the percentages of student current and projected attendance.
- If a student wishes to apply for Special leave, they should discuss their circumstances with the Student Support Officer well in advance. Northwest will consider the application and advise whether the leave will be granted.

7.3 Leave for other reasons

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- If the student has not provided documentary evidence that compassionate or compelling circumstances exist, Northwest will more than likely reject the application. International students who leave Northwest without approval must note that they deemed as being 'At Risk' for not meeting attendance or academic progress requirement and may be reported to DOHA. Reported students may have their visa cancelled.
- Please contact Student Support services for more information.

8. EXPULSION

8.1 Where a serious incident, breach or misconduct has occurred the Student Support Officer is notified immediately by students/staff. After the student is removed from the situation or premises, the misconduct is documented and completed by the relevant staff member. The Student Services Officer will investigate and determine the Northwest position while documenting all aspects of the matter.

8.2 Where a decision is made to cancel student enrolment for misconduct the student is notified in writing of the decision and advised with an Intention to cancel letter.

8.3 The student if dissatisfied with the decision will be given access to the appeals process as per the complaints and appeals policy. For international students, if extenuating circumstances exist, the student will be reported in PRISMS prior to the completion of the internal appeals process. See the definition later in the policy on extenuation circumstances.

8.4 A copy of all documents will be placed on the student file.

9. CANCELLATION

9.1 Students requesting cancellation of their enrolment must do so in writing and at least 4 weeks prior to their term commencement. Students will be subject to the Fees and Refund policy.

9.2 For international students if the student has not completed 6 months of their principal course, and would like to obtain enrolment with another provider, the student is required to apply to be released to another provider. (See Transfer between registered providers policy).

9.3 All students must complete a request form for cancellation available online and submit to Northwest for consideration.

9.4 All students must ensure that all outstanding fees are paid in full and understand that cancellation of enrolment does not remove the right of the student to take further action under Australia's Consumer Protection Law nor does it waiver financial liability.

9.5 Northwest will consider the application under the guidelines of the National Code 2018, Standard 9 and provide the student its position on the application.

9.6 Where the application is refused the student has the right to appeal and is to refer the complaints and appeals policy.

9.7 International students who cancel their enrolment whilst in the reporting process will be reported to the Department of Education and DOHA.

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9.8 International students who cancel their enrolment whilst in the release period (Eg: Not completed 6 months of their principal course) may in some cases be notified to the Department of Education and DOHA.

9.9 International students will be referred to the DOHA website or helpline 131 881 for advice on how the potential change to enrolment status may impact on their visa. Where cancellation proceeds, Northwest will update and place the information on the student file. For international students, changes will be updated on PRISMS where required.

9.10 All documentation will be placed in the student’s file.

10. MISCONDUCT

11. Misconduct is grounds for suspension, exclusion or expulsion as per Student Code of Conduct Policy. Under extenuating circumstances the appeals period is waived.

12. FORMS OF EVIDENCE

Documents to be provided with an application appropriate documentation:

- If the student is requesting deferral then the student must also provide the appropriate documentation.
- If the student is unable to return to home country medically unfit to travel documents are required. Specific dates must be provided. Terms such as ‘early’, ‘mid’, ‘late’ or month only are not acceptable.
- If the student is going offshore then they must be able to show a valid Departure and Return airfare. (This may be purchased after approval)
- Bereavement – A Death Certificate must be provided or verified
- A Traumatic Experience – supporting documentation may be required.

13. PROCEDURE

13.1 Students are informed prior to enrolment of grounds on which enrolment may be deferred, suspended or cancelled (See websites, Offer letter, Orientation).

13.2 International students are informed that deferment, suspension or cancellation of enrolment may affect their student visa. Students should check the DoHA website or helpline on 13881 for information on how the potential change to enrolment status may impact upon their visa.

13.3 Students can access Northwest’s Complaints and Appeals policy if they are not satisfied with the decision of Northwest. Northwest will maintain the student enrolment until the internal appeals process is completed (and has supported the intention to suspend or expel the student).

13.4 Northwest will inform a student of the intention to suspend or cancel the student’s enrolment; notify the student that he or she has 28 days to access the college internal appeals process. (Refers Complaints and Appeals Policy). If the student accesses the internal appeals process, suspension or cancellation of the student’s enrolment will not take effect until the internal process is completed, unless extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student apply.

13.5 Where compassionate and/or compelling circumstances exist and evidence is provided; and Northwest agrees to the action, students may defer or cancel their enrolment immediately.

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13.6 For international students, where a student chooses to access the external appeals process, Northwest does not have to wait for the outcome of external appeal before notifying Department of Education the change to enrolment status if extenuating circumstances apply.

13.7 A student must meet grounds of compassionate and compelling circumstances for granting a deferral.

13.8 Misbehaviour is grounds for suspension or expulsion and subsequent cancellation.

13.9 All student requests must be submitted to Northwest in writing with grounds of the request and supporting evidence in a single submission process. The student will receive a response in writing.

13.10 Deferrals can be granted for a period of up to six months and must be supported by appropriate documentation. A deferral must generally be for the whole term and students are expected to recommence their studies at the beginning of the next term if their request is approved.

13.11 Periods of deferment or suspension are not calculated in a student's attendance, however Northwest will make a note of such on the Student Management System.

13.12 Northwest will notify DOHA through PRISMS of deferment, suspension, and cancellation of enrolment for international students.

13.13 When changes take place under this policy the student's record is updated by administration staff. For international students the CoE is updated when required on the Northwest management system and PRISMS.

13.14 A copy of all documentation is placed on the student file by Northwest.

13.15 If the student breaks the agreement in regards to their deferment or suspension as signed in any student contract; it becomes void.

14. RECORDS AND INFORMATION

A copy of all documents related to a student's deferral, suspension or cancellation of enrolment is retained on the student's file and an e-copy uploaded to the Student Management System. Journal notes are also kept. Letter of

15. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Forms and Record Keeping:

Title	Document Location	Responsible Officer	Minimum Retention Period
Deferral, cancellation or withdrawal application form	1. Student's File 2. Student Administration Database	Admissions Manager	7 years after last entry
Special leave application form	1. Student's File 2. Student Administration Database	Admissions Manager	7 years after last entry
Special Letter approval letter	1. Student's File 2. Student Administration Database	Administration Manager	7 years after last entry
Letter of release	1. Student's File 2. Student Administration Database	Admissions Manager	7 years after last entry

16. REFERENCES

- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000

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- The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, Standard 9 of The National Code
- Standards for RTOs 2015.

17. IMPLEMENTATION

The Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation policy will be implemented throughout Northwest via:

1. An announcement notice at Orientation to all students
2. Inclusion on the Northwest website - Downloads
3. Inclusion on the Northwest online policy library
4. Staff training as necessary including updated versions of this policy.

18. REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Date	Description of modifications
1	2 nd March 2010	Original
2	15 th February 2012	Revised
3.1	May 2012	Revising copy
3.2	1 June 2012	Cancel while deferred clarified
3.3	July 2012	Review, layout update, clarification of some key points
4	July 2014	Review and terminology update
5	October 2015	Review, minor changes DIBP and legislative bodies
6	Sept 2017	Update logo and company name
7	Jan 2018	Review, update National Code 2018 reference, update for National Code changes
8	Jan 2020	Annual review, merger with Completion within expected duration of study policy

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