

WITHDRAWAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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| Document ID | Withdrawal Policy and Procedure |
| Related Documents | <p>International Student Transfer Between Registered Providers Policy</p> <p>Academic and Course Progress Policy</p> <p>Refund Policy</p> <p>Refund Procedure</p> <p>Equity and Diversity Policy</p> <p>Student Grievance and Appeals Policy</p> <p>Special Consideration Form</p> <p>Non-Academic Appeals Procedure</p> <p>Non-Academic Complaint Procedure</p> <p>Course Withdrawal Form</p> |
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| Responsible Officer | Registrar |
| References and Legislation | <p>ESOS Act 2000</p> <p>TEQSA Act 2011</p> <p>TEQSA Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015</p> <p>National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2017</p> <p>Migration Act 1958 and the Migration Regulations</p> |

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1. Purpose

To inform students and staff of APIC's policies and processes relating to course withdrawals.

2. Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all students as well as all staff involved either directly or indirectly with administering requests for course withdrawals and temporary suspension requests.

This policy does not affect a student's right to submit internal and external (to the Overseas Students Ombudsman) complaints and appeals nor does it affect that student's right to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

3. Definitions

| Item | Definition |
|---|--|
| <i>Appeal</i> | The review of a decision made by APIC under this policy. |
| <i>Course</i> | A program of study leading to a formal APIC qualification. |
| <i>Credit</i> | The positive balance of a student account, being a balance greater than zero, as a result of an over-payment of fees to APIC. |
| <i>Compassionate and compelling circumstances</i> | <p>Situations which are generally beyond the control of the student and which have an adverse impact on the student's capacity and/or ability to: commence their course on the scheduled start date, but within two weeks of that date; or to attend scheduled classes for a significant period of time during the enrolment period.</p> <p>Such circumstances include, but are not limited to: Inability to begin studying at the scheduled date due to the late issue of a student's visa and consequent delay in travel to Australia; serious illness or injury, where a verified medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend on the commencement date and/or for a significant time through the course; bereavement of close family members such as parents, siblings or grandparents (where possible a death certificate should be provided); the student recently giving birth or a student's partner recently giving birth, thus preventing commencement on the published start date or attendance for some time through the course (with supporting documentation); major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country preventing their departure for Australia, or requiring their emergency travel to their home country; and a traumatic experience.</p> |
| <i>DIBP</i> | Department of Immigration and Border Protection |

| Item | Definition |
|-------------------------|---|
| <i>Evidence</i> | Will vary regarding the specific circumstances, but could include: relevant DIBP visa documents; relevant travel documents; relevant media reports relating to a natural disaster impacting on a student's area of residence; a relevant medical, death or birth certificate; a police incident report; a social worker's report; and/or a psychologist's report. Certificates not written in English must be translated into English by approved NAATI translators. |
| <i>Principal course</i> | The final course providing the highest qualification in a student's sequenced package of courses |
| <i>Refund</i> | An overpayment of fees or charges which is reimbursed to the payee. |
| <i>SMS</i> | Student Management System |
| <i>Student</i> | Any person who is enrolled in any course or program offer at, or in conjunction with, APIC. |

4. Principles

The Withdrawals Policy and Procedure is guided by the principles of access, equity, fairness and timeliness. APIC is committed to:

- ensuring students that request to withdrawal from a course and/or receive refunds are not victimised or discriminated against
- considering course withdrawal requests in a consistent, transparent, objective and unbiased manner
- making details of the procedure publicly available
- informing students of the policy pre-enrolment and advising students to read it at the commencement of a course
- specifying reasonable timelines for responses and reimbursement of monies at each stage of the process and monitoring of these timelines
- providing reasons and full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the procedures
- keeping appropriate records of withdrawal requests, including brief written outcome, within student files and allowing students access to their records
- ensuring that such records are treated as confidential
- reviewing the Withdrawals process regularly

5. Withdrawal Policy

At any time following enrolment in a course (or the case of international students, the issue of the Confirmation of Enrolment), and prior to the designated course end date, students may apply to withdraw from a course by completing the on-line [Course Withdrawal Form](#).

Any student that withdraws from a course may remain liable for the full course tuition fees, subject to the [Refund Policy](#) which can be found in the College [policy library](#).

Students who withdraw from a course prior to completing the qualification will be given recognition for any units satisfactorily completed up to the date of withdrawal, provided all fees due up until this date have been paid in full.

5.1 Refunds and Student Withdrawal - Package Courses

If a student's CoE is cancelled as a result of their withdrawal before or after the commencement date of a course which is part of an APIC package program, they are entitled to no refund of the course tuition fees or CoE security deposit, nor the materials fee for the course withdrawn from and any subsequent package courses; and a full refund of their OHSC fee if the cancellation/withdrawal is before the course commencement date.

A student can submit course withdrawal and refund applications on-line, and APIC will process the application/s and provide its response within the specified time.

If a student's CoE is cancelled for a breach of their student visa conditions, conditions of enrolment and/or National Code Standards (unsatisfactory attendance, unsatisfactory academic progress, non-payment of fees, etc.), they are entitled to no refund of course tuition fees or CoE security deposit, nor the materials fee for the course withdrawn from and any subsequent package courses; and no refund of their OHSC fee.

If a student's CoE is cancelled due to demonstrated compassionate and/or compelling circumstances, they are entitled to a full refund of tuition fees OR CoE security deposit for the cancelled course and any subsequent package courses plus associated non-tuition fees, minus the lesser of 5% of the amount of course fees received before the default date or \$500, if the withdrawal is before course start date; or a part refund of unspent tuition fees for current course at time of withdrawal, if the withdrawal is after the commencement date of their initial package course).

The student will receive a full refund of their OHSC fee if they withdraw before the commencement date of their first package courses; or no refund of their OHSC fee if they withdraw after the commencement date of their first package course.

5.2 Refunds and Student Withdrawal - Non-Package Courses

If a student's CoE is cancelled because of their withdrawal more than 8 weeks (56 days) before the commencement date of their non-package course, they are entitled to a full refund of their pre-paid course tuition fees or CoE Security Deposit plus enrolment and materials Fees, minus the lesser of 5% of the amount of Course Fees received before the default date or \$500; and a full refund of their OHSC fee.

If a student's CoE is cancelled because of their enrolment cancellation/withdrawal more than 4 weeks (28 days) but less than 8 weeks before the commencement date of their non-package course, they are entitled to a 75% refund of their pre-paid course tuition fees or CoE security deposit plus enrolment and materials fees, minus the lesser of 5% of the amount of course fees received before the default date or \$500; and a full refund of their OHSC fee.

If a student's CoE is cancelled because of their enrolment cancellation/withdrawal more than 2 weeks (14 days) but less than 4 weeks before the commencement date of their non-package

course, they are entitled to a 50% refund of their pre-paid course tuition fees or CoE security deposit plus enrolment and materials fees, minus the lesser of 5% of the amount of course fees received before the default date or \$500; and a full refund of their OHSC fee.

If a student's CoE is cancelled because of their enrolment cancellation/withdrawal less than 2 weeks (14 days) before, or after the commencement date of their non-package course, they are entitled to no refund of their pre-paid course tuition fees or CoE security deposit and materials fee a full refund of their OHSC fee if cancellation is before the official commencement date; or no refund of their OHSC fee if cancellation is after the official commencement date.

If a student's CoE is cancelled because of a breach of student visa conditions, conditions of enrolment and/or National Code Standards (unsatisfactory attendance, unsatisfactory academic progress, non-payment of fees, etc.), they are entitled to no refund of their pre-paid course tuition fees or CoE security deposit and materials fee; and no refund of their OHSC fee

If a student's CoE is cancelled due to demonstrated compassionate and/or compelling circumstances, they are entitled to a full refund of tuition fees OR CoE security deposit for the cancelled course plus associated non-tuition fees, minus the lesser of 5% of the amount of course fees received before the default date or \$500, if the withdrawal is before course start date. If the withdrawal is after the course commencement date, the student is entitled to a part refund, being the unspent tuition Fees at time of withdrawal, a full refund of their OHSC fee if they withdraw before their course commencement date; or no refund of their OHSC fee if they withdraw after their course commencement date.

6. Transferring to Another Registered Provider

In-line with the National Code 2017, international students may transfer from APIC to another registered provider, provided they have completed at least six months of the course in which they are enrolled at APIC, and the student has a valid enrolment offer from the receiving provider. A letter of release will be granted at no cost to the student. A letter of release will not be granted for reasons deemed to be for other than genuine student purposes.

International students may request to transfer from APIC to another registered provider before they have completed six months of the course in which they are enrolled. Requests for transfer in these circumstances will be assessed by the Registrar, and will only be granted where the:

- Student has a valid enrolment offer from the receiving provider
- Course the student wishes to transfer to:
 - better meets the study capabilities of the student
 - better meets the long-term goals of the student, whether these relate to future work, education or personal aspirations
- Student wishes to change course in order to get access to greater support (may be through the services offered by another provider, commercial or non-for-profit services or through access to family, friends or a cultural support network)
- Student claims or can provide evidence that his or her reasonable expectations about the current course are not being met.

Students who are granted permission to transfer to another provider before completing six months in their course at APIC will be provided with a letter of release at no cost. The letter will advise the student of the need to contact the DIBP to seek advice on whether a new student visa is required.

A request for transfer to another provider will be not be granted where it is considered the transfer may be detrimental to the student if:

- The transfer may jeopardise the student's progression through a package of courses; or
- The student only recently commenced studies in the course and the full range of support services are yet to be provided; or
- The student is the subject of procedures which could lead to their being reported to DIBP for breach of their student visa conditions and/or breach of the APIC [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Where a request for transfer is not granted, the Registrar will provide the student with a letter outlining the reason/s for the request being refused and providing information about his/her right to appeal the decision under APIC's [Student Grievance and Appeals Policy](#)

Further details are outlined in the College's International Student Transfer Between Registered Providers Policy which can be found www.apicollege.edu.au.

7. Procedure

1. Students must submit their formal withdrawal, temporary suspension, extension or refund request using the on-line application forms at www.apicollege.edu.au

It is essential that you include:

- a) a detailed explanation of why you are requesting to withdraw from, suspend or extend your course and/or request a refund
 - b) any documentary evidence to support this request e.g. medical certificate, travel documents etc.
2. Students Services staff will evaluate the:
 - a) content of the information supplied by you in the application including any attached evidence
 - b) any relevant information contained within your student record (such as the course commencement date which is required to calculate the number of days from this date that you submitted your application)
 3. The Manager Student Experience and Retention will further investigate the matter by conducting a telephone consultation with the course coordinator to determine whether there are any extenuating circumstances that needs to be considered.
 4. The Manager Student Experience and Retention may contact you if any part of the matter requires further clarification.
 5. The Registrar will decide in-line with this policy no later than 10 days from the date the original student on-line application, with the required documentation, was received and

update the student record in the SMS and provide formal written notification to the student of the outcome.

6. If the withdrawal application is approved, the Registrar will arrange for the issuance of any Statements of Attainment for course units already completed.
7. Where a refund of course tuition fees is to be paid to you, this will be processed under the APIC's Refund Policy and Refund Procedure.
8. Where outstanding fees are payable by you, the Accounting staff will arrange for a final invoice to be issued to you. No Statements of Attainment will be issued for course units already completed until the outstanding payment is made.
9. Student Services staff will update the student record within the SMS with all relevant information and attach any final summary reports of the outcome, which can be accessed by the student through RTO Manager.

8. Appeals

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your application, you are entitled to appeal by completing the on-line [Student Appeal Form](#) – the procedure for appealing it outlined in the [Non-Academic Appeal Procedure](#)?

9. Document Change Control

| Version | Change Description | Date | Author |
|---------|---|----------------|---------------|
| 1.1 | Placed in new policy format and updated | 16 June 2017 | Corinne Green |
| 1.2 | Heading for Section 6 changed and other minor corrections | 29 August 2017 | Corinne Green |
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