

DEFERRAL, EXTENSION, SUSPENSION, WITHDRAWAL AND CANCELLATION POLICY

Purpose

ACTB is committed to providing learners with clear and supportive processes to defer the commencement of their course, extend the duration of their enrolment, temporarily suspend their enrolment, withdraw from their training program or cancel their enrolment. This policy ensures that decisions regarding deferment, extension, suspension, withdrawal or cancellation are handled ethically, fairly, and transparently while aligning with compassionate or compelling circumstances and regulatory requirements.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff and learners; and
- All of our training, assessment, and enrolment business functions.
- Student management software PRISMS

Responsibilities

1. RTO Manager / Administrator

- Ensures compliance with legislation, regulations and Standards for RTOs.
- Process learner requests for deferral, extension, suspension or withdrawal.
- Authorises refunds as per our Fees and Refunds policy.

2. Administrative & Support Staff

- Manages and coordinates requests for deferral, extension, suspension or withdrawal with the RTO Manager and the learner.
- Communicates the process, outcomes and provides relevant documentation to learners.
- Maintains accurate records in the student's file.

3. Trainers & Assessors

- Provides support to learners experiencing challenges that may lead to deferral, extension, suspension, withdrawal or cancellation of their enrolment, and upon their return.
- Alerts RTO Manager / Administrator to any significant learner concerns.

Definition

- A **deferral** is to delay the commencement of a course.
- An **extension** is to extend the enrolment period, up to a maximum of an additional year.
- A **suspension** is to temporarily delay the enrolment once the course has commenced.
- A **withdrawal** is when a learner decides to cease their enrolment in a course.
- A **cancellation** is when the ACTB ceases to provide any further training and assessment services to a learner in respect of a particular enrolment into a course.

General Principles

- We are to observe and uphold the following when managing and administering this policy:
- Ensure that all processes related to deferrals, extensions, suspensions, withdrawals and cancellations are carried out in a fair, impartial and transparent manner.
- Prioritise the well-being and educational needs of the learners by considering their individual circumstances and providing tailored support.
- Aim to minimise disruption to the learner's study journey and ensure continuity of training and assessment, wherever possible.
- Clearly communicate all requirements, timelines and outcomes promptly – including that their *Deferral, Extension, Suspension or Withdrawal Form* is to be lodged at least 10 business days before the date they want their deferral, extension, suspension or withdrawal to take effect.

- Accept and assess any **deferral**, course duration **extension** and **suspension** requests from learners without prejudice, taking into account the personal circumstances of the learner and provide an **extension** to the course duration under certain circumstances, such as:
- Student visa delay (evidenced by communications and records from the Department of Home Affairs).
- In compassionate or compelling circumstances, which include but are not limited to:
 - Serious illness or injury (evidenced by a medical certificate);
 - Bereavement of close family members (evidenced by a death certificate or obituary);
 - Major political upheaval or natural disaster;
- A traumatic experience, which can include, but is not limited to:
 - The involvement in, or witnessing of, a serious accident, or
 - The witnessing of or being the victim of a serious crime (evidenced by police or Psychologist's reports).
- After the implementation of an intervention strategy, the learner is still at risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress.
- **International Students only:** Where an international student is seeking to **defer** their enrolment by a period of 28 days or longer:
 - The learner is to return to their home country unless special circumstances exist; and
 - They should be notified that their student visa may be affected as a result of their deferral and that they should contact the Department of Home Affairs for advice.
- Where ACTB initiates a **suspension** of a student's enrolment, we only do so after.
 - Three formal warnings have been issued, and continuous misconduct, misbehaviour or failure to comply with our Student Code of Conduct persists; or
 - Where serious misconduct, misbehaviour or misuse of our resources by the learner has occurred (where the serious misconduct is considered criminal, the learner may be expelled instead).

- **International Students only:** Where an international student is seeking to **suspend** their enrolment by a period of 28-days or longer:
 - They can only temporarily suspend their enrolment for a maximum of 6-months;
 - If their enrolment is suspended for a period greater than 6-months, their student visa may be cancelled by the Department of Home Affairs;
 - The learner is to return to their home country during the suspension period unless special circumstances exist; and
 - They should be noted that their student visa may be affected as a result of their suspension and that they should contact the Department of Home Affairs for advice.

- Where ACTB initiates a **cancellation** of a student's enrolment, we only do so as a last resort, where:
 - After the learner has already been issued with three formal warnings and a suspension previously due to continuous misconduct, misbehaviour, misuse of our resources, or failure to comply with our Student Code of Conduct persists;
 - Criminal misconduct or behaviour occurring on our premises or using our facilities, resources and/or equipment; or
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 - The non-payment of outstanding course fees and charges, where the learner has failed to resolve the matter following the Overdue Fees and Non-Payment Escalation Process outlined in this policy, including the issuance of reminders, warnings and a Notice of Intention to Cancel Enrolment.
 - Cancellation of enrolment due to non-payment will only occur after the completion of this process and in accordance with the learner's right to access the appeals process. Students will be provided with 20 working days to make payment or lodge an internal appeal following the issuance of a Notice of Intention to Cancel Enrolment.
 - Enrolment will remain active and will not be cancelled until the internal appeals process has been completed.
 - ACTB will only report a student to the Department of Education via PRISMS where the student has not accessed the internal appeals process within the required timeframe, or where the appeals process has been completed and the decision is upheld.

- Where the **withdrawal** request is successful, or the **cancellation** of the learner's enrolment is not appealed, the learner will be issued with a Statement of Attainment for the units they have already completed.
- Where refunds are due as a result of the learner's enrolment deferral, extension, suspension, withdrawal or cancellation, they are to be processed in line with our Fees and Refunds policy and promptly.

Overdue Fees and Non-Payment Process

Where a student fails to pay fees by the due date, ACTB will follow a structured escalation process to support resolution prior to cancellation of enrolment.

The process includes the following stages:

1. **Reminder(s)**
A reminder will be issued prior to or shortly after the due date advising that payment is due.
2. **Overdue Notice**
If payment is not received, a formal overdue notice will be issued advising that fees are outstanding and requesting payment.
3. **Warning**
Where fees remain unpaid following previous reminders, ACTB will issue a formal warning advising that payment is required immediately and that continued non-payment may result in a Notice of Intention to Cancel Enrolment.
4. **Notice of Intention to Cancel Enrolment (20 Working Days)**
If payment is still not received, ACTB will issue a Notice of Intention to Cancel Enrolment, providing the student with **20 working days** to:
 - Make payment, or
 - Access the internal appeals process
5. **Appeal Window**
Students have the right to lodge an internal appeal within 20 working days.
Enrolment will remain active while the internal appeals process is being considered.
6. **Final Outcome**
Where:
 - The student does not access the appeals process within the required timeframe; or
 - The appeals process is completed and the decision is upheld

ACTB may proceed with cancellation of enrolment.

7. **PRISMS Reporting**
ACTB will only report the cancellation of enrolment to the Department of Education via PRISMS where:
 - The student has not accessed the appeals process within the required timeframe; or
 - The internal and external appeals processes have been completed and the decision is upheld

Students are encouraged to contact ACTB if payment has already been made or if there is an error.

Students experiencing financial or personal difficulties are encouraged to access ACTB's support services.

Compliance

This policy aligns with:

1. Standards for RTOs 2025:

- **Standard 2.1** – VET students have access to clear and accurate information, including to make informed decisions about the training product and the RTO, and are made aware of changes that affect them.
- **Standard 2.3** – VET students have reasonable access to training support services, teachers, Trainers & Assessors and other staff to support their progress through the training product.
- **Standard 2.8** – Effective appeal processes are available where decision of the RTO or a third- party adversely impact a VET student.
- **Standard 4.2** – Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood.
- **Standard 4.3** – Risks to VET students, staff and the RTO are identified and managed.
- **Standard 4.4** – The RTO undertakes systematic monitoring and evaluation to support the delivery of quality services and continuous improvement.

2. National Code 2018:

- **Standard 8** – Overseas Student Visa Requirements.
- **Standard 9** – Deferring, Suspending or Cancelling the Overseas Student's Enrolment.

Failure to comply with this policy can have serious consequences, including but not limited to:

- **For the RTO** – breaches of legislation or regulatory requirements may result in financial penalties, loss of registration, reputation damage, or regulatory enforcement actions.
- **For Staff Members** – staff found to have knowingly or negligently failed to comply with this policy and any associated legislative or regulatory requirements may face disciplinary actions, up to and including termination of employment.
- **For Learners and Clients** – disruptions in training and assessment services, experience financial losses and/or emotional trauma from the mishandling of the requests.

Continuous Improvement

- Feedback from staff, learners, clients and industry stakeholders will be used to inform improvements to compliance processes and the effectiveness of our operations.
- An internal audit is to be conducted at least once per year to assess our compliance with this policy and the relevant legislative and regulatory requirements. The audit schedule is outlined in our *Continuous Improvement Schedule*, and areas for improvement are documented in our *Continuous Improvement Register*.
- Internal audit review questions for self-assurance purposes should include:
 - Are all requests assessed fairly and without prejudice, taking individual circumstances into account?
 - Are all forms and supporting documentation collected and stored in the learner's file?
 - Are learners provided with timely, clear communication about the status and outcome of their requests?
 - Is the learner's well-being considered in all decisions relating to course deferral, suspension or withdrawal?
 - Are approved course extensions and suspensions formally recorded and updated in the Student Management System?
 - Are students given the opportunity to appeal any suspension or cancellation before it is finalised?

Related Documents

- Appeals – Acknowledgement of Appeals letter template
- Appeals – Successful letter template
- Appeals – Unsuccessful letter template
- Appeals Form
- Cancellation letter – Expulsion template
- Cancellation letter – Non-Payment template
- CoE Training Plan templates
- Continuous Improvement Schedule
- Deferral letter template
- Deferral, Extension, Suspension or Withdrawal Form
- Payment Refund Form
- Student Handbook
- Withdrawal letter template