

Deferral, Suspension, Withdrawal and Cancellation Policy and Procedures

1. Purpose

This policy sets out how National Training College of Australia (NTCA) manages the deferral, suspension, withdrawal and cancellation of a student's enrolment. It provides a clear process for:

- Assessing and deciding on student requests for changes to enrolment consistently and fairly.
- Initiating provider actions when required.
- Communicating decisions to students in a fair, timely, and transparent manner.
- Ensuring all actions are supported by appropriate evidence and properly recorded.

The aim is to ensure decisions are consistent, protect student welfare, and maintain accurate enrolment records while minimising disruption to students' study plans.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all enrolled international students (current and prospective), NTCA staff involved in admissions, student support, compliance, and management of enrolments as well as education agents representing NTCA.

3. Policy Statement

NTCA may approve or initiate the **deferral**, **suspension**, **withdrawal** or **cancellation** of a student's enrolment in specific circumstances, ensuring:

- Applications are assessed consistently and fairly.
- All decisions are supported by documentary evidence.
- Students are informed of their rights, including the right to appeal.
- Reporting obligations to PRISMS are met.

Some important definitions for the purpose of clarity of this policy and procedures are:

- Deferral: Delay in commencement of a course before the scheduled start date.
- Suspension: Temporary pause of enrolment after the course has commenced.

- Withdrawal: Student-initiated permanent exit from a course.
- Cancellation: Termination of enrolment in a course.
- Non-Commencement: Occurs where a student has not undertaken, and will not undertake, any period of study with NTCA under the relevant CoE. This includes circumstances where the student does not attend or engage from the scheduled course start date, advises that they will not commence, or NTCA determines after reasonable follow-up that the student will not commence that enrolment.
- Compassionate or Compelling Circumstances: Circumstances beyond the student's control impacting their capacity to commence or continue studies, including but not limited to:
 - Serious illness or injury (supported by a valid medical certificate).
 - Bereavement of a close family member (supported by a death certificate where possible).
 - Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel.
 - A traumatic experience (e.g., serious accident, crime victimisation) supported by police or psychological reports.
 - Delays in visa processing preventing timely arrival.
- Student Misconduct: Breaches of the Student Code of Conduct, including disruptive behaviour, harassment, academic dishonesty, or unsafe actions.

Students are informed of this policy and related information via the ***Student Handbook*** and NTCA website.

Deferral, suspension, withdrawal and cancellation of a student's enrolment may happen in the following circumstances:

- Student-Initiated Requests: Where the student is unable to commence or attend classes for a significant period due to compassionate or compelling circumstances.
- Provider-Initiated Actions: NTCA may initiate suspension or cancellation of a student's enrolment after commencement where required due to misconduct, non-payment of fees, unsatisfactory attendance, unsatisfactory course progress, or other breaches of enrolment conditions. These actions are subject to written notice and appeal rights where required. This may include:
 - Non-payment of fees: As per the Written Agreement.
 - Failure to meet visa conditions, including attendance or course progress requirements.

Where the course cancellation is provider initiated, the students are informed of:

- of NTCA's intention to suspend or cancel the enrolment.
 - of their right to appeal a decision in accordance with the *Feedback, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures* within 20 working days of notification and that the suspension or cancellation will not take effect until the appeal process is finalised unless extenuating circumstances apply (e.g., risks to health, safety, or welfare).
 - this policy does not remove their right to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws.
 - to contact the Department of Home Affairs for advice on the effect of such changes to enrolment status on their visa and that deferrals or suspensions over six months may result in visa cancellation.
 - Where a student is requesting withdrawal from a course as they wish to transfer to another provider, they must refer and follow the *Student Transfer between Providers Policy and Procedures*.
- Non-commencement of studies: Non-commencement of studies is managed separately from provider-initiated suspension or cancellation. Where a student does not commence their course and does not undertake any period of study under the relevant CoE, NTCA will report the non-commencement in PRISMS within required timeframes. NTCA treats the scheduled course start date on the CoE as the default event date for non-commencement reporting, unless there is documented evidence of an approved or actively assessed deferral, late commencement, or other enrolment variation. Where the student has not undertaken any period of study under the relevant CoE, NTCA will report non-commencement without issuing a 20-working-day Notice of Intention to Report, provided reasonable contact attempts and the basis for the reporting decision are recorded.

Guiding Principles:

- Compliance with Regulatory Standards – All actions will comply with the ESOS Act 2000, National Code 2018 Standard 9, and SRTOs 2025 requirements for transparency, fairness, and accurate recordkeeping.
- Fair and Consistent Decision-Making – All applications and provider-initiated actions will be assessed on individual merits using consistent criteria, without discrimination.
- Evidence-Based Assessment – Decisions will be based on verifiable documentary evidence, retained in the student's file.
- Transparency and Clear Communication – Students will be informed in writing of all decisions, reasons, potential impacts, and appeal rights.

- Protection of Student Welfare – Immediate action may be taken if the student's health, safety, or wellbeing is at risk, supported by documented evidence.
- Support for Genuine Students – Reasonable steps will be taken to assist students facing compassionate or compelling circumstances to continue their studies.
- Timely Processing – Applications and decisions will be processed within published timeframes to minimise disruption to studies and visa status.
- Accurate PRISMS Reporting – Approved deferrals, suspensions, cancellations, withdrawals and non-commencements will be reported to the Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS within required timeframes. Non-commencement SCVs will be reported within 14 calendar days of the scheduled course start date listed on the CoE, unless there is documented evidence that NTCA is actively assessing a deferral, late commencement request, or other enrolment variation.

4. Procedure

The following procedures ensure compliant management of deferral, suspension and course cancellation requirements.

4.1 Student-Initiated Deferral

- Students are required to complete and submit the ***Deferral, Suspension, Withdrawal Form (DSW)*** with supporting evidence at least 10 working days prior to the start date of the course unless in emergencies.
- Student Support/Admin team reviews the application within ten (10) working days, and written outcome is provided to the student.
- If the student request for deferral of the course start date is approved students are issued an updated ***Letter of Offer and Written Agreement***.
- When the student accepts this updated ***Letter of Offer and Written Agreement*** by returning a signed copy back to the RTO, this change is reported via PRISMS and an updated CoE is issued.

4.2 Non-Commencement of Studies

- Where a student does not commence on the scheduled course start date listed on the CoE, NTCA will review orientation attendance, class commencement records, and student communications to determine whether the student has commenced, requested a deferral, requested late commencement, withdrawn, or failed to commence.

- NTCA will attempt to contact the student and/or authorised education agent within 1–2 business days of the scheduled course start date to confirm the student’s circumstances and intention to commence.
- For non-commencement reporting, NTCA treats the scheduled course start date listed on the CoE as the default event date. Where the student has not commenced by that date and has not obtained an approved deferral, late commencement approval, or other approved enrolment variation, **NTCA must report the non-commencement SCV in PRISMS within 14 calendar days of the scheduled course start date.**
- Where NTCA has documented evidence that the student is actively seeking an approved deferral, late commencement approval, or other enrolment variation, the matter must be monitored and finalised promptly. The reason for any delayed non-commencement reporting trigger must be recorded on the student file.
- Non-commencement reporting is not treated as a provider-initiated suspension or cancellation decision for the purpose of the 20-working-day Notice of Intention to Report and internal appeal process. Where the student has not undertaken any period of study under the relevant CoE, NTCA may report the CoE in PRISMS as **Non-commencement of studies** without issuing a Notice of Intention to Report, provided reasonable contact attempts and the basis for the non-commencement decision are recorded on the student file.
 - This does not prevent the student from contacting NTCA to raise concerns, provide evidence, or make a complaint under NTCA’s Feedback, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures. However, the standard 20-working-day appeal period that applies to provider-initiated suspension or cancellation decisions does not delay non-commencement reporting.
- NTCA will retain records of all contact attempts, student or agent communication, attendance checks, internal notes, PRISMS reporting records, and any approved or declined enrolment variation requests on the student file.

4.3 Student- Initiated Suspension

- Students are required to complete and submit the ***Deferral, Suspension, Withdrawal Form (DSW)*** with supporting evidence at least 10 working days prior to the start date of the suspension period unless in emergencies.
- Within ten (10) working days, student support/admin team reviews the application for compelling and compassionate grounds for suspension of studies, and written outcome is provided to the student.

- The student's course progress is verified with the training team to advise the student of an alternate training plan post suspension period is over to accommodate the missed time as well as any course progress requirements. The students are also informed of the possible changes to the course end dates resulting from this suspension of studies.
- If the student agrees to the new course end date and the training plan, this change is reported via PRISMS and an updated CoE is issued.

4.4 Course Withdrawal

- Students must submit **Deferral, Suspension, Withdrawal Form (DSW)** with supporting evidence.
- Course withdrawal due to change of provider will be processed as per the *Student Transfer between Providers Policy and Procedures* and submit the new provider details within the **Deferral, Suspension, Withdrawal Form (DSW)** as well as the new Course Offer as evidence.
- NTCA may refuse withdrawal if:
 - Less than six months of primary course completed (unless release conditions met).
 - Outstanding fees remain unpaid.

4.5 Provider-Initiated Cancellation

- NTCA team identifies student breach (e.g., misconduct, non-payment, unsatisfactory attendance and/or course progress after commencement or any other breach of enrolment conditions) and issues written **Notice of Intention to Report** with reasons of course cancellation and students' appeal rights.
- NTCA allows 20 working days for the student to appeal.
- If appeal not upheld, NTCA admin team processes course cancellation and reporting via PRISMS.
- In extenuating circumstances (serious welfare risk), action may be immediate.

4.6 Recordkeeping

- All forms, evidence, and communications are retained in the student file.
- Decisions and rationale are documented in the Student Management System (SMS).

Standard Operating Procedure: DSCW Management

Step	Procedure Description	Responsible Person(s)	Supporting Documents
Deferral, Suspension and Withdrawal			
1	Receive DSW Form and evidence from the student	Student Support / Admin Officer	DSW Form, supporting evidence (where applicable)
2	Review the request against this policy, including whether the request relates to deferral, suspension, withdrawal, transfer to another provider, compassionate or compelling circumstances, or other enrolment variation.	Student Support / Admin Officer	DSW Form, Assessment Notes and supporting evidence.
3	Where the request may affect course progress, training plan, attendance, course duration, or CoE dates, seek input from the Training Coordinator.	Student Support Officer / Training Coordinator	Training plan/ Timetable, course progress records, attendance records
4	Approve/decline request within 10 working days from the receipt of the request. - Provide the student with a written outcome, including reasons for the decision and any relevant next steps.	Student Support / Admin Officer	Written outcome
5	- For approved deferral requests, issue an updated Letter of Offer and Written Agreement where required. - For approved suspension requests, advise the student of any updates to the training plan/ timetable, course end date, and CoE implications.	Student Support Officer / Admin Officer	Letter of Offer and Written Agreement, revised training plan/ timetable, email communication
6	Receive signed updated Letter of Offer and Written Agreement from the	Student Support Officer / Admin Officer	Signed Letter of Offer and Written Agreement,

	student, or written confirmation of agreement to the revised training plan and course end date, where applicable.		student confirmation email
7	Update the student's enrolment record and CoE in PRISMS where required.	Admin Officer	PRISMS record, CoE, SMS notes
8	Save all forms, evidence, decisions, communications, PRISMS records and updated enrolment documents to the student file.	Admin Officer	SMS, student file, PRISMS record
Provider Initiated Cancellation			
9	Identify the reason for possible provider-initiated cancellation, such as non-payment of fees, misconduct, breach of enrolment conditions, unsatisfactory attendance, unsatisfactory course progress, or other relevant grounds.	Admin Officer / Student Support Officer / Training Coordinator	Attendance records, course progress records, fee records, incident reports, student file notes
10	Review the matter against this policy and relevant NTCA policies to confirm whether provider-initiated cancellation is appropriate.	Student Support Officer / Admin Officer/ Training Coordinator and Compliance Coordinator, where required	Policy review notes, evidence, SMS notes
11	Issue a written Notice of Intention to Report where required, including the reason for the proposed cancellation, evidence relied on, possible impact on the student's CoE or visa, and the student's right to access NTCA's complaints and appeals process within 20 working days.	Admin Officer / Student Support Officer	Notice of Intention to Report, evidence, email communication
12	Allow the student 20 working days to access the internal complaints and appeals process, unless extenuating circumstances apply, such as a serious risk to health, safety or welfare.	Admin Officer/ Student Support Officer & RTO Manager (if required)	Complaint or appeal records, student communication

13	If the student appeals, maintain the enrolment until the internal appeal is finalised, unless extenuating circumstances apply. Where required, wait until external appeal rights or processes are completed before reporting.	Admin Officer/ Student Support Officer & RTO Manager and Compliance Coordinator (if required)	Appeal outcome, external appeal evidence, SMS notes
14	If the student does not appeal, withdraws the appeal, or the final outcome supports cancellation, process the cancellation and complete PRISMS reporting within required timeframes.	Admin Officer	PRISMS SCV record, cancellation record, SMS notes
15	Notify the student of the final outcome and retain all records on the student file.	Admin Officer / Student Support Officer	Final outcome email, student file, SMS notes

Non-Commencement of Studies

16	Check orientation attendance records, class commencement records, SMS notes and student communications on or immediately after the scheduled course start date listed on the CoE.	Admin Officer / Student Support Officer	Attendance record, class list, SMS notes
17	Where the student has not commenced, contact the student and/or authorised education agent within 1–2 business days to confirm whether the student intends to commence, request deferral, request late commencement, withdraw, or not proceed with the course.	Admin Officer / Student Support Officer	Email communication, call log, agent communication
18	If the student has not commenced and no approved deferral, late commencement approval, or other approved enrolment variation applies, determine that the CoE is to be reported as non-commencement of studies.	Student Support Officer / Admin Officer	Orientation attendance records, contact attempts, SMS notes, student or agent communication

19	Report non-commencement of studies in PRISMS within 14 calendar days of the scheduled course start date listed on the CoE, unless there is documented evidence that NTCA is actively assessing a deferral, late commencement request, or other enrolment variation.	Admin Officer	PRISMS SCV record, CoE record
20	Non-commencement reporting is not treated as provider-initiated cancellation for the purpose of the 20-working-day Notice of Intention to Report and appeal process, as the student has not undertaken any period of study under the relevant CoE.	Admin Officer / Compliance Coordinator (where required)	Student file notes, PRISMS record
21	Save all contact attempts, student or agent communication, attendance checks, decision notes, PRISMS records, and any approved or declined enrolment variation requests to the student file.	Admin Officer	Student file, SMS, PRISMS record

5. Supporting Documents

- Deferral, Suspension, Withdrawal (DSW) Form
- Student Handbook
- Student Code of Conduct
- Letter of Offer and Written Agreement
- Notice of Intention to Report
- PRISMS SCV Record / Report
- Student Management System Notes
- Attendance / Orientation Records

6. Related Policies

- Student Information Policy and Procedures

- Student Enrolment and Written Agreement Policy and Procedures
- Fees, Charges and Refunds Policy and Procedures
- Student Transfer Between Providers Policy and Procedures
- Feedback, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures
- Document Management and Records Retention Policy and Procedures

7. Roles & Responsibilities

CEO: Approves this policy and makes final decisions in complex or escalated cases.

RTO Manager: Oversees policy implementation, staff guidance, and authorises provider-initiated actions.

Admin Officer: Processes approved requests in PRISMS, issues updated CoEs and maintains accurate records.

Student Support Officer: Receives and assesses applications, communicates outcomes, and supports students.

Training Coordinator: Advises on academic impacts, adjusts training plans, and monitors course progress.

Compliance Coordinator: Monitors compliant PRISMS reporting during annual reviews and supports improvements.

8. Legislative Background

This policy is guided by the following legislative and regulatory frameworks:

- Standard 9 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 under the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act).
- Standard 2.1 of the Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2025 under the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 (Cth).

9. Monitoring and Improvement

This policy is reviewed annually or earlier in response to changes in regulatory requirements or audit outcomes. Review activities including, audit findings, and student, staff as well as industry feedback.