

Suspension, Cancellation, Approved Leave and Withdrawal from Courses Procedure

EFFECTIVE UNTIL 31 DECEMBER 2025

Audience:

Staff, students, public

Objectives:

- To provide the processes for students to seek Approved Leave, Reduced Study Load and to withdraw from a Course, and for the University to suspend or cancel a student's enrolment in a Course.

Scope:

- This procedure applies to Coursework courses. Graduate Research students and candidates should refer to the *Graduate Research Degrees Regulations*.

Definitions:

Any defined terms below are specific to this document. The definition of common terms appears in the Murdoch University Dictionary of Terms.

- **“Approved Leave”** is an approved temporary break from study requested by a student who is enrolled in a Course, where the first census date of that Course has passed.
- **“Approved Withdrawal”** is where a student withdraws from enrolment in a unit after the end of the census date for that unit and the University approves the withdrawal without academic penalty.
- **“Cancellation of Enrolment”** is where the University ceases a student's enrolment in a Course.
- **“Domestic Student”** is an Australian citizen, an Australian permanent resident (including humanitarian visas) or a New Zealand citizen.
- **“International Student”** is a person (whether within or outside Australia) who holds an Australian student visa but does not include:
 - a Foreign Affairs student (within the meaning of the Migration Regulations 1994); or
 - a Defence student (within the meaning of the Migration Regulations 1994); or
 - a secondary exchange student (within the meaning of the Migration Regulations 1994); or

- an international student who has been approved under a scholarship scheme, or an exchange scheme, sponsored by the Commonwealth to undertake a course of study or training in Australia; or
- a person who satisfies the secondary criteria, but not the primary criteria, under the Migration Regulations 1994 for the grant of the visa.
- **“PRISMS”** is the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS). It is the system used to process information given to the Secretary of the Department of Education by the University.
- **“Principal Course”** is the main course of study to be undertaken by an International Student where a student visa has been issued. The principal course of study would normally be the final course of study where the International Student arrives in Australia with a student visa that covers multiple courses.
- **“Suspension of Enrolment”** is a temporary break from studies and is mandated by the University, not requested by a student.
- **“Transnational Student”** is a student who is enrolled to study at a Murdoch location in Dubai, Singapore.
- **“Withdrawal”** is where a student formally ceases to study a unit or Course prior to completion.

Implementation Steps:

1. Approved Leave

- 1.1 Applications for Approved Leave may be initiated by students:
 - 1.1.1 who are enrolled in a course;
 - 1.1.2 who are seeking a break from Coursework study for a specific length of time, and
 - 1.1.3 the first census date of that course has passed.

Prior to the first census date of that Course students must apply for Deferral.
- 1.2 International Students must liaise with a member of the Student Support team prior to Approved Leave being granted.
- 1.3 The minimum time of Approved Leave for Coursework Courses is one teaching period. The maximum periods of Approved Leave are set out in the *Enrolments (Coursework) Procedure*. Students wishing to take a longer period of leave must withdraw from their Course and apply for readmission, unless a longer period of leave is approved in accordance with the *Enrolments (Coursework) Procedure*.
- 1.4 Approved Leave must not be granted where:
 - 1.4.1 the period of leave exceeds the maximum amount allowed as specified in the *Enrolments (Coursework) Procedure*; or
 - 1.4.2 the Course or Course components are being discontinued and the units required to be completed by the student will not be available when they intend to return to study; or

- 1.4.3 enrolment in the Course or required units is limited, and there will be no availability when the student intends to return to study; or
- 1.4.4 the student is subject to Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment; or
- 1.4.5 the student is an International Student and there are no compelling or compassionate circumstances beyond the student's control that impact the student's ability to progress in the Course or impact the student's wellbeing. Such circumstances must be considered on an individual basis, and may include, but are not limited to:
 - 1.4.5.1. a serious illness or injury supported by a medical certificate;
 - 1.4.5.2. a bereavement of a close family member, supported by a death certificate if possible;
 - 1.4.5.3. a major political upheaval or natural disaster in the student's home country requiring emergency travel, supported by a travel itinerary;
 - 1.4.5.4. a traumatic experience supported by a statement from the police or a health worker;
 - 1.4.5.5. where Murdoch was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit;
 - 1.4.5.6. where the student has failed a prerequisite unit and therefore faces a shortage of relevant units for which they are eligible to enroll; or
 - 1.4.5.7. the student is required to undertake military service in their home country.
- 1.5 Director, Student and Library Services or delegate must determine whether a Domestic Student or International Student undertaking Coursework can have Approved Leave, in consultation with a relevant Academic Chair or supervisor where required.
- 1.6 The relevant campus Dean must determine whether a Transnational Student can have Approved Leave, in consultation with a relevant Academic Chair or supervisor where required.
- 1.7 Academic Chairs must be consulted in a decision regarding Approved Leave where the student might not complete a Coursework Award Course in the maximum completion time required by the *Coursework Regulations*, or where there is uncertainty about the availability of units that the student is required to complete due to professional accreditation requirements or other reasons.
- 1.8 Supervisors must be consulted in a decision regarding Approved Leave where the student might not complete a graduate Award Course in the maximum completion time required by the *Coursework Regulations*, or where the student is seeking leave from an Honours Course in a discipline other than Engineering.
- 1.9 Director, Student and Library Services or delegate, and transnational partners must keep a record of any decisions regarding Approved Leave. This includes records of who made the decision to approve or deny leave, the grounds for that decision, the length and dates of Approved Leave, and the date when the decision was made.

1.10 For International Students who are granted Approved Leave:

- 1.10.1 Director, Student and Library Services or delegate must advise the student to contact the Department of Home Affairs to seek advice on their student visa, advise the student of the implications of the leave on their Overseas Student Health Cover, and provide information about tuition fees including any relevant refund processes.
- 1.10.2 Director, Student and Library Services or delegate must report the change to the student's enrolment in PRISMS in accordance with section 19 of the ESOS Act.
- 1.10.3 Where the leave is granted for compelling or compassionate reasons, the Director, Student and Library Services or delegate must ensure the student has a valid Confirmation of Enrolment in PRISMS with a start date that reflects the student's intended date of return to studies.
- 1.10.4 Where the leave will not affect the end date of the Confirmation of Enrolment, the Director, Student and Library Services or delegate must record the leave in PRISMS.
- 1.10.5 Where the leave will affect the end date of the Confirmation of Enrolment, the Director, Student and Library Services or delegate must update PRISMS with a new Confirmation of Enrolment with a new end date.

2. **Withdrawal from a Course**

- 2.1 Domestic Students and Transnational Students may withdraw from a Course at any time subject to any local regulatory requirements in the transnational education location.
- 2.2 International Students who have not yet completed six months of their Principal Course may not withdraw from a Course without approval and should refer to the *International Student Transfer Procedure*. International Students who have completed six months of their Principal Course may withdraw from a Course without approval.
- 2.3 For International Students who withdraw from a Course, Director, Student and Library Services or delegate must advise the student to contact the Department of Home Affairs to seek advice on their student visa, advise the student of the implications of suspension on their Overseas Student Health Cover, and provide information about tuition fees including refund processes. Director, Student and Library Services or delegate must cancel the student's Confirmation of Enrolment and communicate this to the student and report the change to the student's enrolment in PRISMS in accordance with section 19 of the ESOS Act.
- 2.4 See the *Enrolments (Coursework) Procedure* for more information.

3. **Approved Withdrawal**

- 3.1 Where a student:
 - 3.1.1 has been enrolled in a unit at the University;

- 3.1.2 has not completed the requirements of the unit during the teaching period in which the student undertook or was to undertake the unit; and
- 3.1.3 withdraws from the unit after the end of the Census Date of the teaching period in which they were enrolled in the unit.

the Head of College, by whatever name known, or Pro Vice Chancellor Transnational Education where the student is enrolled at a transnational location, may grant a student Approved Withdrawal from that unit.

- 3.2 The student must demonstrate that the reasons for withdrawal after the end of the Census Date:
 - 3.2.1 were not the result of the student's actions or inaction
 - 3.2.2 could not be accommodated through deferred assessment
 - 3.2.3 could not reasonably have been anticipated by the student.
- 3.3 The student must apply for Approved Withdrawal in writing:
 - 3.3.1 if the student has withdrawn from the unit and the University gives notice to the student that the withdrawal has taken effect, within 12 months after the day specified in the notice as the day the withdrawal has taken effect; or
 - 3.3.2 otherwise, 12 months after the end of the teaching period during which the student undertook, or was to undertake, the unit.

4. Reduced Study Load

- 4.1 Domestic or Transnational Students who reduce their study load must ensure that they are able to complete their course in the maximum completion time required by the *Coursework Regulations*.
- 4.2 The Director Student and Library Services or delegate must determine whether an International Student can reduce a full-time study load. A reduction may be permitted if there are compelling and compassionate circumstances beyond the student's control that impact the student's ability to study full-time. The circumstances may include:
 - 4.2.1 a serious illness or injury supported by a medical certificate
 - 4.2.2 a bereavement of a close family member, supported by a death certificate if possible
 - 4.2.3 a major political upheaval or natural disaster in the student's home country requiring emergency travel, supported by a travel itinerary
 - 4.2.4 a traumatic experience supported by a statement from the police or a health worker
 - 4.2.5 where Murdoch was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit
 - 4.2.6 where the student has failed a prerequisite unit and therefore faces a shortage of relevant units for which they are eligible to enrol
 - 4.2.7 the student is required to undertake military service in their home country.

- 4.3 In determining if an International Student can reduce their study load, the Director Student and Library Services or delegate must consult with the Academic Chair where:
 - 4.3.1 there is uncertainty about the availability of units that a student is required to complete due to professional accreditation or other reasons.
- 4.4 Where a reduction in study load is granted to an International Student, the Director Student and Library Services or delegate must:
 - 4.4.1 advise the student to contact the Department of Home Affairs to seek advice on their student visa and provide information about tuition fees including any relevant refund processes
 - 4.4.2 report the change to the student's enrolment in PRISMS in accordance with section 19 of the ESOS Act
 - 4.4.3 where the reduced study load will affect the end date of the Confirmation of Enrolment, update PRISMS with a new Confirmation of Enrolment with a new end date.

5. Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment

- 5.1 Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment in Coursework Courses may be initiated by the University for academic progression reasons, student discipline reasons, enrolment reasons or *Fee Rules* requirements.
- 5.2 Throughout each teaching period, Director, Student and Library Services or delegate must regularly verify that all International Students are enrolled as expected.
- 5.3 If a student does not enrol in any units in a standard teaching period for their Course and has not requested Approved Leave, their enrolment in a Course will be cancelled after:
 - 5.3.1 one year for domestic Coursework courses; or
 - 5.3.2 one teaching period for International Students undertaking Coursework.
- 5.4 Where the student is an International Student, Director, Student and Library Services or delegate must advise the student of the intention to suspend or cancel their enrolment in writing. This correspondence must:
 - 5.4.1 include detailed reasons for the suspension or cancellation;
 - 5.4.2 for suspension, specify the duration of the suspension; and
 - 5.4.3 advise of the student's right to access the University's appeals process within 20 working days.
- 5.5 Unless the student's health or wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, is likely to be at risk, the suspension or cancellation must not take effect until the student has chosen not to access the appeals process within the 20 working day period, or any appeal process is complete, or the student withdraws from an appeal process.
- 5.6 For International Students who have their enrolment suspended or cancelled:

- 5.6.1 Director, Student and Library Services or delegate must advise the student to contact the Department of Home Affairs to seek advice on their student visa, advise the student of the implications of the suspension or cancellation on their Overseas Student Health Cover, and provide information about tuition fees including refund processes.
 - 5.6.2 Director, Student and Library Services or delegate must report the change to the student's enrolment in PRISMS in accordance with section 19 of the ESOS Act.
 - 5.6.3 Where a suspension will not affect the end date of the Confirmation of Enrolment, the Director, Student and Library Services or delegate must report the suspension in PRISMS.
 - 5.6.4 Where the suspension or cancellation will affect the end date of the Confirmation of Enrolment, the Director, Student and Library Services or delegate must update PRISMS with a new Confirmation of Enrolment with a new end date, or where it is not known if the student will return, the Confirmation of Enrolment must be cancelled.
- 5.7 Where a student has had their enrolment cancelled and they wish to recommence, they must apply for readmission. The student may be required to demonstrate that they have addressed the cause of the Cancellation of Enrolment.
6. Student Appeal
- 6.1 A student may appeal the decision to suspend or cancel their enrolment or to deny approved withdrawal in accordance with the *Student Appeals Policy and Procedures*.

Performance Indicators:

There are no performance indicators.

Related Documents:

[Coursework Regulations: Effective from 1 January 2018](#)

[Enrolments \(Coursework\) Procedure](#)

[Fee Rules](#)

[Graduate Research Degrees Regulations](#)

[International Student Transfer Procedure](#)

[Student Integrity Regulations](#)

References:

There are no references.

Approval and Implementation:

Approval Authority:	Director Student and Library Services
Responsible Officer(s):	Director Student and Library Services
Committee with oversight:	Academic Courses and Admissions Committee
Contact Officer:	Associate Director Student Administration

Revision History:

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