

Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Policy and Associated Procedures

Policy Area:	Student Enrolment Management, Course Progress & Behavioural Management
Standards Reference:	Outcome Standard 1.2, 1.6, 2.1, 4.2 & Compliance Standard 20
Responsibility:	CEO, RTO Manager, Student Support Officer, Compliance Officer, Administrative Staff
Classification:	Internal Enrolment Administration and Student Management Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Policy and Associated Procedures is to outline the Institute of International Studies (IOIS) framework for managing changes to a student's enrolment status in a **fair, transparent, and consistent manner**.

This policy establishes clear processes for deferring, suspending, or cancelling a student's enrolment where required due to academic, attendance, behavioural, financial, compassionate, or administrative circumstances. It ensures that decisions affecting enrolment status are made based on documented evidence, applied consistently, and supported by procedural fairness.

The policy ensures that students are informed of their rights and responsibilities, are given reasonable opportunity to respond to concerns, and are supported appropriately before any adverse action is taken. Where action is required, IOIS ensures continuity of learner protection, accurate recordkeeping, and compliance with internal policies and regulatory obligations.

This policy supports compliance with the **Standards for RTOs 2025**, particularly the requirements relating to learner protection, fair treatment, transparency of decisions, and access to complaints and appeals processes. It also aligns with IOIS's commitment to quality assurance, risk management, and continuous improvement.

2. Scope

This Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Policy and Associated Procedures apply to **all students enrolled with IOIS**, including **domestic and offshore students**, regardless of delivery mode or location.

The policy applies to all **IOIS staff** involved in enrolment management, academic decision-making, student support, and administrative processes associated with changes to a student's enrolment status.

This policy applies to **all circumstances where an enrolment change may occur**, whether initiated by:

- A **student request**, including compassionate, medical, personal, or other extenuating circumstances; or
- An **IOIS-initiated decision**, including but not limited to unsatisfactory course progress, attendance issues, non-payment of fees, breaches of policy or code of conduct, or administrative or compliance requirements.

All deferral, suspension, and cancellation decisions are managed in accordance with principles of **procedural fairness, transparency, equity, and learner protection**, ensuring that students are informed of decisions, provided an opportunity to respond, and advised of their rights to appeal in line with IOIS policies.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Policy and Associated Procedures, the following definitions apply:

- **Deferral:** The postponement of a student's course commencement or start date before training has begun. Deferral may be approved due to compassionate, personal, administrative, or other documented circumstances.
- **Suspension:** A temporary pause in a student's studies after training has commenced, during which the student is not actively participating in training or assessment. Suspension may be initiated by the student or IOIS and is granted for a specified period with an agreed return date.
- **Cancellation:** The termination of a student's enrolment prior to the completion of the course. Cancellation may occur at the request of the student or be initiated by IOIS where continuation of enrolment is no longer appropriate or viable.

4. Policy Statements

4.1 Principles

IOIS ensures that all decisions to defer, suspend, or cancel enrolments are made in a fair, consistent, and transparent manner, supported by appropriate documentation and evidence. Decisions are based on individual circumstances, policy requirements, and regulatory obligations, with due consideration given to learner protection and equity.

Students are informed of their right to access the Complaints and Appeals Policy if they disagree with a decision relating to deferral, suspension, or cancellation. IOIS upholds procedural fairness by ensuring students have the opportunity to be heard and to seek a review of decisions that affect their enrolment status.

All enrolment variations, including approvals, refusals, and changes to enrolment status, are accurately recorded in the Student Management System (SMS) and retained in the student file to ensure transparency, audit readiness, and compliance.

IOIS ensures that students are fully informed of the implications of any enrolment change prior to confirmation. This includes the impact on fees and refunds, expected completion timelines, access to training and assessment, and certification outcomes, enabling students to make informed decisions about their enrolment.

4.2 Grounds for Deferral

Students may request a **deferral of course commencement** prior to the start of training where circumstances prevent them from commencing as scheduled. IOIS considers deferral requests on a case-by-case basis and applies principles of fairness, compassion, and evidence-based decision-making.

Grounds for deferral may include, but are not limited to:

- **Personal illness or injury** that impacts the student's ability to commence training.
- **Family or personal circumstances**, such as bereavement or critical illness of an immediate family member.
- **Other compassionate or compelling reasons** that are supported by appropriate documentation.

All deferral requests must be submitted using the approved **Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Form** and must include **supporting evidence**, such as a medical certificate, statutory declaration, or written explanation detailing the circumstances. IOIS assesses the request and advises the student of the outcome in writing, including any conditions or implications for fees, course scheduling, and enrolment timelines.

4.3 Grounds for Suspension

IOIS may approve a **suspension of studies** where a temporary pause in enrolment is required after training has commenced. Suspension is considered where it is in the best interests of the student and supports learner protection, wellbeing, and the likelihood of successful course completion.

Grounds for suspension may include:

- **Compassionate or compelling circumstances**, such as serious illness, injury, or significant personal hardship.
- A demonstrated need for **temporary leave of absence**, generally for a period of **up to twelve (12) months**, due to personal, family, or health-related reasons.
- Circumstances where **IOIS determines that a temporary pause is required** to allow the student time to address identified academic, attendance, LLN, wellbeing, or other support needs as part of an intervention process.

All suspension requests must be **submitted in writing** using the approved Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Form and must be supported by **appropriate evidence**, such as medical documentation or a written explanation. IOIS assesses each request on its merits and advises the student in writing of the outcome, including the approved suspension period, return-to-study requirements, and any implications for fees, course progression, and completion timelines.

4.4 Grounds for Cancellation

A student's enrolment may be **cancelled** either at the request of the student or by decision of IOIS, where continuation of enrolment is no longer appropriate or viable. All cancellation decisions are made in accordance with principles of procedural fairness, learner protection, and documented evidence.

1. **Student-initiated cancellation (Withdrawal):** A student may request cancellation of their enrolment at any time by submitting a written request using the approved **Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Form**. IOIS acknowledges the request and confirms the effective cancellation date and any implications for fees, refunds, access to learning systems, and certification outcomes in writing.
2. **Provider-initiated cancellation:** IOIS may initiate cancellation of a student's enrolment where there is sufficient evidence that continuation of enrolment is not in the student's or IOIS's best interests. Grounds for provider-initiated cancellation may include, but are not limited to, situations where the student has:
 - **Failed to pay course fees** in accordance with the agreed payment schedule, despite repeated reminders, warnings, and reasonable opportunity to resolve the matter, as outlined in the Fees and Refunds Policy.
 - **Breached IOIS policies or codes**, including but not limited to the Code of Conduct, Academic Integrity or Plagiarism Policy, or other behavioural or ethical requirements.
 - **Failed to engage meaningfully in their course**, including persistent non-attendance, non-submission of assessments, or failure to comply with agreed intervention strategies despite documented support and opportunities to improve.

- Engaged in behaviour that threatens the safety, wellbeing, or rights of others, including students, staff, or visitors, or that poses a risk to the learning environment.

Prior to cancelling an enrolment, IOIS ensures that the student has been **formally notified of concerns in writing**, provided with reasonable opportunities to respond or rectify the situation, and informed of their **right to appeal** the decision through the Complaints and Appeals Policy. All cancellation decisions, supporting evidence, and communications are documented and recorded in the Student Management System to ensure transparency and compliance.

4.5 Fees and Refunds

IOIS ensures that all financial matters arising from deferral, suspension, or cancellation of enrolment are managed transparently and in accordance with approved policies and legislative requirements.

Any **fees paid and refunds due** as a result of a deferral, suspension, or cancellation are processed strictly in accordance with the **IOIS Fees and Refunds Policy and Associated Procedures**. Refund eligibility, amounts, and timeframes are determined based on the circumstances of the enrolment change and the applicable policy provisions.

Students are **advised in writing** of the financial implications of any approved or initiated deferral, suspension, or cancellation. Written advice includes information on applicable fees, any refund or outstanding balance, revised payment obligations (if applicable), and the effective date of the enrolment change, ensuring that students are able to make informed decisions.

4.6 Student Rights

IOIS upholds the principles of procedural fairness and learner protection in all decisions relating to deferral, suspension, or cancellation of enrolment.

Students are **informed in writing** of any decision to defer, suspend, or cancel their enrolment. The notification includes the **reasons for the decision**, the effective date, and information about the implications for training, assessment, fees, and course completion.

Students have the right to **lodge an appeal within twenty (20) working days** of receiving written notification of the decision. Appeals are managed in accordance with the **IOIS Complaints and Appeals Policy**, which provides a fair, transparent, and impartial review process.

Where an appeal is lodged, the student's **enrolment status remains active** during the appeal process, and no further action relating to the deferral, suspension, or cancellation is implemented until the appeal outcome is finalised, unless otherwise required to protect the safety or wellbeing of others.

5. Procedures

5.1 Student-Initiated Requests

IOIS applies a structured and timely process to manage requests initiated by students for deferral, suspension, or cancellation of enrolment.

Students are required to complete the approved Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Form and submit the request in writing. Requests must clearly state the reason for the enrolment change and specify whether deferral, suspension, or cancellation is being sought.

Students must attach supporting evidence to substantiate their request, where applicable. Supporting evidence may include medical certificates, statutory declarations, personal statements, or other relevant documentation.

Upon receipt of a completed request, the Administration Officer formally acknowledges receipt within three (3) working days, confirming that the request is under review.

The Academic Manager reviews the request and all supporting evidence to assess eligibility and appropriateness in line with this policy and related procedures. Where clarification or additional information is required, the student may be contacted.

A decision is made within ten (10) working days of receiving a complete request. The outcome is confirmed in writing to the student and includes the effective date of the enrolment change, any conditions applied, and information about fees, refunds, and appeal rights.

All decisions and supporting documentation are recorded in the Student Management System (SMS) and retained in the student file to ensure transparency, audit readiness, and compliance.

5.2 Provider-Initiated Decisions

IOIS applies a fair and transparent process when a deferral, suspension, or cancellation is initiated by the provider.

Where grounds for suspension or cancellation are identified, the **Academic Manager** formally documents the issue and determines the need for provider-initiated action. Grounds may include, but are not limited to, non-payment of fees, breaches of IOIS policies or codes of conduct, ongoing unsatisfactory course progress or attendance, or behaviour posing a risk to others.

A **written notice** is issued to the student explaining:

- The **reason for the proposed or confirmed decision**.
- The **evidence supporting the decision**, including relevant records or incidents.
- The student's **right to appeal** the decision under the Complaints and Appeals Policy.
- The **deadline for response or appeal**, being **twenty (20) working days** from the date of notification.

Where **no appeal is lodged within the specified timeframe**, the decision is finalised and implemented. The enrolment status is updated in the **Student Management System (SMS)**, and all related documentation is filed in the student record.

Where an appeal is lodged, the matter is managed strictly in accordance with the **IOIS Complaints and Appeals Policy**. No further action is taken to implement the suspension or cancellation until the appeal process is completed and an outcome is determined, unless immediate action is required to protect the safety or wellbeing of others.

5.3 Recordkeeping

IOIS maintains accurate, complete, and secure records relating to all deferral, suspension, and cancellation activities to support transparency, accountability, and compliance.

All **applications, supporting evidence, correspondence, decisions, and notifications** relating to deferral, suspension, or cancellation are **stored in the student's file** and recorded in the **Student Management System (SMS)**. Records are retained in accordance with IOIS recordkeeping and privacy requirements.

In addition, IOIS maintains a **Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Register**, which contains a summary of all cases, including the type of enrolment change, reason, decision date, and outcome. The register is used for monitoring trends, supporting quality assurance activities, and informing continuous improvement processes.

6. Responsibilities

Clear responsibilities are assigned to ensure that deferral, suspension, and cancellation processes are managed consistently, fairly, and in compliance with this policy.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for overseeing organisational compliance with this policy and for approving the policy and any significant amendments.

The Academic Manager is responsible for reviewing student-initiated requests and provider-initiated cases, making decisions in accordance with this policy, communicating outcomes to students in writing, and ensuring that all enrolment status changes are accurately updated in the Student Management System (SMS).

The Administration and Student Support Officer is responsible for providing students with the required forms, logging and tracking applications, maintaining the Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Register, issuing written communications, and ensuring that records are complete, accurate, and securely stored.

Students are responsible for submitting accurate and complete forms and supporting evidence in a timely manner and for complying with agreed outcomes, conditions, or requirements associated with deferral, suspension, or cancellation decisions.

7. Related Documents

- Deferral, Suspension, and Cancellation Form
- Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Register
- Student Handbook
- Fees and Refunds Policy
- Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Student Code of Conduct

Document Version Control

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1.0	IOIS Deferral, Suspension or Cancellation Policy and Associated Procedures V1.0	July 2025