



Policy Context

This policy relates to:	
Registration Manager	Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)
Conditions of Registration	VET Quality Framework (VQF)
Codes and Standards	ESOS National Code 2018 – Standard: 3.3.5; 8.16.3; 9.1; 9.4; 9.5; 9.6; Standards for SRTOs 2015 – Standard: 1.7; 6.2; 6.3; 6.4; 6.5;
Legislation or other requirements	National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2012

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the circumstances in which a student can defer, suspend or cancel their enrolment with Veritas Institute Australia and where Veritas Institute Australia can initiate the suspension, deferment or cancellation of the student's enrolment.

This policy and procedure ensures Veritas Institute Australia's compliance with Standard 9 of the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.

Objective

The objective of this Policy and Procedure for Veritas Institute Australia is to ensure that Veritas Institute Australia:

- provides guidelines for suspending, deferring or cancelling student enrolments with Veritas Institute Australia in accordance standard.
- outline the relationship between Veritas Institute Australia and the enrolled student, and define the obligations of both parties for the duration of the enrolment
- provide policy and procedure for assessing, approving and recording a deferment of the commencement of study or suspension of study for a student.
- inform students before the enrolment about grounds on which their enrolment be deferred, suspended or cancelled.
- For the purposes of this policy, the term "Veritas Institute Australia" refers to the Registered Training Organization.

Scope

This policy applies to all prospective and enrolled students

Policy Statement: Our Commitment

Veritas Institute Australia is committed to maintaining compliance with all regulatory, legislative and contractual requirements. Specifically, we will:

- Ensure that all students complete their course on time;
- Extend the student's course under compassionate or compelling circumstances;
- Provide the implementation of intervention strategies for students at risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress; or
- Comply with the requirements of granting of an approved deferment or suspension of study as per standard.



Definitions

CoE means Confirmation of Enrolment

Compassionate or compelling circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the student and which have an impact upon the student's course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but are not limited to:

- serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (Where possible a death certificate should be provided)
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the student's studies
- a traumatic experience that has impacted on the student which could include involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident or witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime. Such cases supported by police or psychologists' reports
- where Veritas Institute Australia is unable to offer a pre-requisite unit
- inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa

DET means Department of Education and Training

Department of Home Affairs is a central policy agency, providing coordinated strategy and policy leadership for Australia's national and transport security, federal law enforcement, criminal justice, cyber security, border, immigration, multicultural affairs, emergency management and trade related functions.

Cancellation / Withdrawal means cessation of enrolment in a course or permanent termination of the student's enrolment. Student who has not commenced their course after 2 weeks from the due commencement date and not informed Veritas Institute Australia of their reasons of absence from studies will be treated as 'inactively' notifying Veritas Institute Australia that they will not be commencing their studies.

Note:- For International students - Veritas Institute Australia will notify Department of Home Affairs and DET via PRISMS of 'Non-Commencement of Studies' to cancel the student's enrolment.

For Domestic students – Student's enrolment will be cancelled and Veritas Institute Australia will not notify the student of its intent to cancel the student's enrolment or wait the outcome of an appeal as the student will be treated as inactively withdrawn from the course.

Deferral means to postpone commencement of studies.

Suspension is a temporary postponement or delay in commencement of studies.

PRISMS means Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS)



Policy

Deferral and suspension of studies

1. Deferral and suspension of studies will only be granted in compassionate or compelling circumstances as included in the definitions above. The circumstances listed are example of what may be considered compassionate or compelling circumstances and each case will be assessed on its individual merits.
2. When determining whether compassionate or compelling circumstances exist, Veritas Institute Australia considers documentary evidence provided to support the claim, and stores copies of these documents in the student's file.
3. A retrospective deferment or suspension may be justified if the student was unable to contact Veritas Institute Australia because of a circumstance such as being involved in a car accident.
4. Where a student-initiated deferral or suspension of enrolment is granted, Veritas Institute Australia will suspend an enrolment for an agreed period of time - to a maximum of 6 months. If the deferral is required for longer than 6 months, the student's application will be re-assessed. If the suspension period has expired and the student does not return, the student's enrolment will be cancelled.

Cancellation of studies

5. Students may initiate cancellation of their studies at any time during their course. Students who wish to withdraw within six months of their course to transfer to another provider will be processed as per Veritas Institute Australia's Transfer of Students between Providers Policy * Procedure.
6. Veritas Institute Australia may also initiate suspension or cancellation of a student's enrolment on the grounds of misbehaviour of the student or non-payment of fees. Information in the Domestic & International Student Handbook describes the behaviour expected by students, as well as information on plagiarism, collusion and cheating.
7. Cancellation of the student's enrolment due to unsatisfactory course progress will be handled as per Veritas Institute Australia Course Progress Monitoring Policy & Procedure.

Visa status (International students only)

8. Deferment, suspension or cancellation of a student's visa may affect the student's visa. When a student's enrolment is deferred, suspended or cancelled, Veritas Institute Australia will notify DET via PRISMS of the change in enrolment status.
9. Where a student accesses the Complaints and Appeals process, Veritas Institute Australia will not notify DET via PRISMS until the internal appeals process is complete. Where the student chooses to access an external appeals process, DET will still be notified via PRISMS.
10. Students are referred to the Department of Home Affairs website (<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/student-500>) or Helpline (131 881) for information and their local office for advice on how the potential change to enrolment status may impact upon his or her visa.
11. Once the DET has been notified of a suspension or cancellation of a student's enrolment, the student has 28 days in which to leave Australia or show the Department of Home Affairs a new CoE or provide the Department of Home Affairs with evidence that he or she has accessed an external appeals process.



12. Regardless of whether the suspension of enrolment is the result of a student request for suspension or a suspension imposed by Veritas Institute Australia the period of suspension of enrolment (as entered in PRISMS) will not be included in attendance monitoring calculations.
13. Where Veritas Institute Australia initiates the suspension or cancellation of a student's enrolment, the student will be notified of this intention and will be informed that they have 20 working days to access Veritas Institute Australia's Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure, unless extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student apply. Such circumstances may include where the student refuses to maintain approved care arrangements (only for students under 18 years of age), is missing; has medical concerns, severe depression or psychological issues which lead the provider to fear for the student's wellbeing; has engaged or threatens to engage in behaviour that is reasonably believed to endanger the student or others; or is at risk of committing a criminal offence.
14. Students may choose to access an external appeal process as per Veritas Institute Australia's Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure. In the case of an external appeal, Veritas Institute Australia is not required to wait for the outcome of the external appeal before notifying Department of Home Affairs of the change to the student's enrolment status.
15. In relation to suspension, Veritas Institute Australia will continue to provide learning opportunities to students during the appeals process and students to continue to attend class so as not to deny them learning opportunities or disadvantage their subsequent studies should the appeals process find in their favour. The only exclusion to this will be in the case of a student who has breached the student's code of conduct and is a risk to his/herself or to the safety of others.
16. Veritas Institute Australia provides information about its Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Policy and Procedure in the Student Handbook and at orientation.
17. Student may access all relevant forms for deferral or suspension through Veritas Institute Australia via email or by direct request.
18. Standards of behavior required are outlined in the Student Handbook.
19. Appropriate records of the assessment of the student's application for deferment, suspension or cancellation will be kept on the student's file. Where a student is suspended or their enrolment cancelled due to misbehaviour, documentary evidence of this decision will also be kept.



Procedure

1. Student initiated deferral of enrolment

Procedure	Responsibility
A. Process application from student <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide deferral, suspension form on request to students.• Assist students to complete form as required.	Administration
B. Assess request for deferral and respond to student <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider reasons for request for deferral and approve cases that fall within compassionate and compelling circumstances as defined in this policy.• Notify DET through PRISMS that the student will be deferring their enrolment.• Where the deferral is approved, the end date of the CoE is affected, a new CoE is created through PRISMS and sent to the student to reflect the new commencement date.• Forward notification of decision within 10 working days of receipt of an application.• Where the request for deferral is approved and does not affect the end date of the CoE (i.e. it is a short period of deferment), although a new CoE will not be required, a notice of deferral will be recorded in PRISMS.• Where the request for deferral is refused, the student will be informed of the decision including the reason for refusal, as well as their right to appeal the decision within 20 working days. The refusal of the request for deferral will be entered into PRISMS and the CoE cancelled. Student will be required to contact Department of Home Affairs to obtain relevant and current information that may affect their student visa.• A refund of fees paid will be made as per Veritas Institute Australia's Fees and Refunds Policy and Procedure	RTO Manager Administration

2. Student-initiated suspension of enrolment

Procedure	Responsibility
C. Process student request for suspension of studies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide student the Application for Deferral or Suspension Form for request for suspension of studies.• Provide assistance to students in completing an Application for Deferral or Suspension Form as required.• Students wishing to suspend their enrolment must apply in writing to Veritas Institute Australia a minimum ten (10) working days prior to the requested suspension date. Note, however, that suspension may be granted retrospectively where the student was unable to contact the organisation to inform them of the suspension in their studies e.g. they were involved in a car accident.	RTO Manager Administration
D. Assess request for suspension of studies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider reasons for request for suspension.• Approve cases that fall within compassionate and compelling circumstances as defined in this policy.• Notify DET via PRISMS of suspension of enrolment. Where the suspension is approved and does not affect the end date of the CoE (i.e. it is a short period of suspension), although a new CoE will not be required, a notice of suspension will be recorded in PRISMS and sent on to Department of Home Affairs.	RTO Manager Administration



- Where the request for suspension is approved and affects the CoE, create a new CoE through PRISMS and send to the student, along with a new written agreement for signing to reflect the new CoE.
- If it is unclear when the student will return, wait until the student has advised of the intended date of return before creating a new CoE.
- If the student does not return after a break, it is considered that the student has 'inactively' advised Veritas Institute Australia that they will not be continuing their studies. DET is notified via PRISMS and student's enrolment status is recorded on PRISMS as cancelled.
- Inform student where the request for suspension is refused, including the reason for refusal and of their rights to access the Complaints and Appeals process.
- All decisions on suspension are to be advised to students within 10 working days of receipt of an application.

3. Student-initiated cancellation of enrolment (withdrawal)

Procedure	Responsibility
E. Assess student request for suspension of studies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide student with the Course Cancellation / Withdrawal Form. Application for Withdrawal forms can be accessed from Veritas Institute Australia's website or from a Staff Member.• Provide assistance to students as required to complete an Application for Withdrawal Form.• Organise meeting with student to discuss reasons for the withdrawal.	RTO Manager Administration
F. Process application for withdrawal <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete course variation report in PRISMS. This will result in the status of the CoE changing to cancelled.• Include reason for cancellation of enrolment, date enrolment was cancelled and any other relevant information.• Process applicable refunds in accordance with Veritas Institute Australia's Fees and Refunds Policy and Procedure.• Ensure that student's financial records are adjusted to take into account the cancellation of enrolment as relevant.• Inform all relevant personnel that the student's enrolment has been cancelled.• Advise student in writing that their enrolment has been cancelled and that Department of Home Affairs has been informed and they will be advised of their change in visa arrangements.• Record cancellation of enrolment on Student Management System.• Include all documentation in the student's file	RTO Manager Administration

4. Provider-initiated suspension or cancellation of enrolment

Procedure	Responsibility
G. Suspend student <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inform student in writing that they are temporarily suspended because of misbehaviour and that they will need to continue to attend classes except where behaviour is considered to be such that the student needs to complete work outside of the class.• Notify DET within 14 days of the suspension via a course variation in PRISMS of the suspension as per the instructions in the PRISMS user guide.	RTO Manager Administration



<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investigate student misbehaviour that led to suspension decision.	
H. Decide on action and implement decision <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arrive at an appropriate decision e.g. issue a warning, charge for any damage caused, request a formal apology or suspend or cancel studies.• Where the decision is to cancel the student's enrolment, provide the student with a Notice of Intention to Cancel Enrolment Letter informing them of their right to access the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.• Where the student accesses the Complaints and Appeals process and the decision following the internal appeals process is to cancel the student's enrolment, DET should be informed via PRISMS.	RTO Manager Administration

Continuous Improvement

This policy and procedure is designed to ensure that the student support services policy and procedure is in place and the delivery of our courses across Veritas Institute Australia and qualifications ensure management become aware of:

- Common threads relating to the compliance and quality assurance.
- Repeat issues
- Any general adverse trend that needs correcting

Confidentiality and Privacy Statement

For more Information, please refer to our Privacy and Confidentiality Policy & Procedure.

Publication

This policy once approved, will be available to all students and staff by accessing Veritas Institute Australia's Intranet or on request. This policy will also be available through Veritas Institute Australia's website as well. This policy and procedure will form part of the information distributed and communicated during staff orientation.

Review processes

The policy will be reviewed annually by the RTO Manager/CEO.