

Change of Study Load Procedures

1. Governing policy

These procedures relate to the *Terms and Conditions of Enrolment*. They describe how staff will enact the terms and conditions in respect to the steps taken for students to apply to change their study load at the Institution.

2. Scope

These procedures apply to all students (excluding ELICOS) seeking approval to change their study load at the Institution, subject to the conditions in these procedures, and staff involved in approving the requests. These procedures are aligned with applicable Australian Government legislation including the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training of Overseas Students 2018 (National Code).

3. Procedures

3.1 All undergraduate subjects are equivalent to three credit points, with the exception of the Work Integrated Learning (WIL) subjects which are equivalent to six credit points.

3.2 All postgraduate subjects are equivalent to four credit points, with the exception of the WIL subjects which are equivalent to eight credit points.

3.3 A full-time load at the Institution (for students who are not on WIL) is normally:

- no more than 9 credit points and no less than 6 credit points in each study period in a given academic year (this must equate to a maximum of 27 credit points per year) for undergraduate courses; and
- no more than 12 credit points and no less than 8 credit points in each study period in a given academic year (this must equate to a maximum of 36 credit points per year) for postgraduate courses.

3.4 The accelerated study load (for students who are not on WIL) in one study period is:

- 12 credit points (this equates to a maximum of 36 credit points per year) for undergraduate courses; and
- 16 credit points (this equates to a maximum of 48 credit points per year) for postgraduate courses.

3.5 Students undertaking a WIL subject, may complete WIL on its own *or* they may complete additional credit points to the WIL subject as outlined below:

- a maximum of 9 credit points per study period for undergraduate courses (this equates to WIL plus one additional subject); and
- a maximum of 12 credit points per study period for postgraduate courses (this equates to WIL plus one additional subject).

3.6 Students must apply to change their study load beyond the approved full-time and accelerated study load limits.

3.7 A reduced study load is:

- less than 6 credit points per study period (or less than 18 credit points per year) for undergraduate courses; and
- undertaking less than 8 credit points per study period (or less than 32 credit points per year) for postgraduate courses.

3.8 A credit overload, which can only be requested in exceptional circumstances where a student has progressed successfully in previous teaching periods and requires a subject overload of one additional subject to complete the course is:

- 15 credit points for undergraduate courses in one study period (not including WIL);
- 20 credit points for postgraduate courses in one study period (not including WIL);
- 12 credit points for undergraduate courses in one study period for students undertaking WIL (this equates to one WIL subject plus two additional subjects); and
- 16 credit points for postgraduate courses in one study period for students undertaking WIL (this equates to one WIL subject plus two additional subjects).

3.9 These procedures set out the five key processes involved in assessing a student's request to change their study load from a fulltime load, to either

increase the number of subjects or load (also known as overload), or reduce the number of subjects or load (also known as reduced load), as per Table 1 below:

1. Eligibility

International students on a student visa must complete their course within the duration specified on their current Confirmation of Enrolment (COE). In limited circumstances an international student enrolled in a fulltime study load for a given study period may be eligible to reduce their study load for that study period. Domestic students are eligible to reduce their study load without seeking approval. Both domestic and international students are eligible to apply to increase their study load in limited circumstances.

2. Submit request

An international student must meet with the Student Success Centre prior to submitting an application to reduce their study load with supporting documentary evidence. All students must submit an application to overload their subjects in a given study period.

3. Change of study load assessment and outcome

A change of study load application is assessed as per the guidelines explained in these procedures. Requests for a reduced study load from an international student can only be approved for compassionate or compelling circumstances, or where an intervention strategy has been implemented, as per Standard 8 of the National Code, with supporting documentary evidence. The Institution may request additional supporting evidence if it is dissatisfied with the supporting documentary evidence submitted.

4. Review the outcome

Students have the right to lodge a complaint regarding a decision that resulted in their request for a change of load being refused in accordance with the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Complaints and Appeals Procedures.

5. Recording/reporting

Change of study load approvals are recorded accordingly on the student management system.

Table 1.

Process	Responsibilities	Timeframe
Step 1 Eligibility		

<p style="text-align: center;">Reduced load:</p> <p>1.1. To be eligible to apply to reduce study load to less than fulltime, the following applies:</p> <p>1.1.1. Domestic students are eligible to reduce their study load, if their course permits part time study, by changing their enrolment by Census Date. They do not need to proceed further with these procedures.</p> <p>1.1.2. International students on a student visa are not permitted to reduce their study load unless:</p> <p>a. compassionate or compelling circumstances exist including (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • serious illness or injury affecting a student’s ability to study; • witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime; • bereavement of close family members, such as parents or grandparents; • major political upheaval or natural disaster in a student’s home country; <p>• where the Institution is unable to offer a subject due to the structure of the course delivery schedule; or</p> <p>b. academic difficulties exist and a reduced load is part of an intervention strategy.</p> <p>1.1.3. International students must contact the Student Success Centre (SSC) to discuss reducing their load before submitting an application. Students should seek support as early as possible once they become aware of any personal, medical, or academic challenges, particularly if they believe a reduced study load may be necessary.</p> <p>1.1.4. International students must provide sufficient and credible supporting documentary evidence with their application which may include (but is not limited to):</p> <p>a. a medical certificate/letter from a practitioner registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency. A list of practitioners is available here: Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency – About registration. All medical certificates/letters must clearly explain how the condition affects the student’s ability to engage with their studies, include details of the diagnosed condition, outline the management and treatment plan, and specify the expected duration of impact;</p> <p>b. a death certificate;</p> <p>c. a police report;</p> <p>d. case number as evidence of an intervention strategy and proof of ongoing support from the SSC staff;</p> <p>e. written approval for the reduced load request, from the sponsor of international sponsored students;</p> <p>f. written approval for the reduced load request from the home institution of study abroad students.</p> <p>1.1.5. Supporting documentary evidence if not issued in English must be translated by an official translator. Translators in Australia must be certified by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI).</p> <p>1.1.6 If the Institution deems the supporting documentary evidence submitted to be inadequate or insufficient, the student may be required to provide additional documentation in support of their application. In addition, the Institution checks all documentation for authenticity.</p> <p>1.1.7. International students in their final study period do not need to seek approval to reduce their study load if the course will be completed during that study period.</p> <p>1.2. The Institution retains the right to approve or reject a request on a case by case basis.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Overload:</p> <p>1.3. To be eligible to apply to overload the normal fulltime credit point limit, the following applies:</p> <p>1.3.1. The course rules must allow for a credit overload;</p> <p>1.3.2. An application for overload cannot normally be made in the first two enrolled study periods;</p> <p>1.3.3. Overloaded enrolments must not exceed a normal fulltime study load plus two subjects in any one study period;</p> <p>1.3.4. A student cannot apply to overload a previously failed subject;</p> <p>1.3.5. Students must have good academic standing as defined by the <i>Academic Progression Procedures</i> with a GPA of 2.5 or higher in the previous two study periods;</p> <p>1.3.6. A student may apply to overload in their second last study period, where the overload allows them to complete their course early, with no subjects remaining in the final study period; and</p> <p>1.4. The Institution retains the right to approve or reject a request on a case by case basis.</p>	<p>Student, Student Success Centre</p>	
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Step 2 Submit request		
2.1 Students applying to reduce their study load or increase their study load must apply using the online form by Census Date for domestic students, and by 5pm week 2 for international students together with supporting documentation as per 1.1.4.	Student	Before census date
Step 3 Change of study load assessment and outcome		
<p style="text-align: center;">Reduced load:</p> <p>3.1 A Program Manager assesses and makes a decision on the request for a reduced study load based on the conditions of these procedures and approves or rejects the application, communicating the outcome to the students and logging it in the student management system.</p> <p>3.2 Applications from international students for reduced study load will be rejected where the Institution determines:</p> <p>3.2.1 There are no compassionate or compelling circumstances to support the application;</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">3.2.2 Insufficient evidence has been submitted;</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">3.2.3 Fraudulent supporting documentation has been submitted;</p> <p>3.2.4 Financial or employment related issues are provided as a reason for reducing load;</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">3.2.5 The intervention strategy did not include reduced load as a recommendation;</p> <p>3.2.6 An international sponsored student did not obtain approval from their sponsor; or</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">3.2.7 A study abroad student’s home institution did not approve a reduced study load.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Overload:</p> <p>3.3 A Program Manager assesses and makes a decision on the request for an overload based on the conditions of these procedures and approves or rejects the application, indicating the outcome in the student management system.</p> <p>3.4 Applications for overload will be rejected where the Institution determines:</p> <p>3.4.1 The eligibility criteria to overload, as detailed in clauses 1.3.1 - 1.3.6, was not met;</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Outcome:</p> <p>3.5 A student is notified via email of the outcome within 10 working days of submission. If the assessment will take longer than 10 working days, the student will be notified.</p> <p>3.6 If the change of study load request is approved, the notification will include:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">3.6.1 Approval to reduce load OR overload including details of the subjects;</p> <p>3.7 If the change of study load request is rejected, the notification will include:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">3.7.1 The reason(s) for rejection; and</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">3.7.2 The right to lodge a complaint about the decision within 20 working days as per the <i>Complaints and Appeals Policy</i> and <i>Complaints and Appeals Procedures</i>.</p>	Program Manager	10 working days
Step 4 Review the outcome		
<p>4.1 The student submits a complaint about the decision as per the <i>Complaints and Appeals Policy</i> and <i>Complaints and Appeals Procedures</i>.</p> <p>4.2 Student Services is notified of the outcome of the review of the decision.</p> <p>4.3 If the refusal decision is upheld, no further action is required from Student Services.</p> <p>4.4 If the outcome is to grant the change of study load request, Student Services proceeds to Step 3.6 to notify the student of the approval.</p>	Student Services	
Step 5 Recording/reporting		
<p>5.1 The change of study load outcome is recorded on the student management system, including the reasons for approval and rejection.</p> <p>5.2 Student Services proceeds to drop or add the subjects as per the final outcome.</p> <p>5.3 The change of study load documentation, including the supporting documentary evidence is saved in the student management system. The Institution maintains records of all requests and decisions for two years after a student ceases to be an accepted student.</p>	Student Services	

4. Roles and responsibilities

The Registrar is responsible for overseeing the change of study load procedures.

5. Compliance and monitoring

These procedures are written in accordance with the National Code and HESF.

6. Records management

As detailed in Table 1 above, release requests are recorded in the Institution's database and records of the request to change study load are filed and saved for two years.

7. Related documents

Terms and Conditions of Enrolment

8. Version history

Summary of changes	Approval date	Approved by
	2 August 2019 & 9 March 2023	Academic Board
Comprehensive review	7 November 2024	Course and Subject Committee
Strengthened processes to ensure only genuine reduced study load requests are approved.	29 September 2025	Learning and Teaching Committee