Deferral of Course Commencement Procedures

1. Governing policy

These procedures relate to the *Admissions Policy* ("policy"). They describe the process for assessing and managing requests from students to defer the commencement of their course to a later commencement date at the Institution.

These procedures are aligned with relevant Australian Government legislation including the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training of Overseas Students 2018* (National Code), Standard 9, which requires providers to have documented processes for assessing, approving, recording and reporting a deferral of commencement of studies.

2. Scope

These procedures apply to commencing students who request to defer the start of their studies, and staff responsible for implementing these procedures. They do not apply to students who wish to take a leave of absence once their course has commenced (refer to the Leave of Absence Procedures) or enrolled students who are seeking to defer an assessment (refer to the Assessment, Submission, Extension and Feedback Procedures).

3. Procedures

Eligibility for deferral

3.1. Students who have received an offer of admission may request to defer their course commencement date for a period of up to 12 months, in accordance with the *Admissions Policy*, and subject to:

1. availability of the course in the requested intake; and
2. availability of places in that course.

Students may utilise a maximum deferral period of 12 months during their enrolment. This may be taken as a single deferral of up to 12 months or multiple deferrals that cumulatively do not exceed 12 months. Each deferral period must

be a minimum of one study period (e.g. five weeks for Aspire English, a trimester for higher education courses, or seven weeks for higher education courses commencing at the mid-trimester intake). The Institution may consider a further deferral upon submission of compelling evidence, consistent with Standard 9 of the National Code.

Deferral process

3.2. The procedures below set out the two key processes involved in assessing a request to defer commencement as outlined in Table 1.

1. ***Submit deferral request***
   Students who have received an offer but have not accepted it, must contact the Admissions team to request a deferral of commencement date.

Students who have accepted their offer, including international students who have paid the tuition fee deposit and been issued a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE), must submit a deferral request using the **ONLINE FORM** prior to 5pm, Friday of Orientation Week, including the reason for the request.

Once an international student has been granted a student visa, requests to defer their commencement date may only be approved where compassionate or compelling circumstances exist, in accordance with the National Code, Standard 9, and must be supported by appropriate documentary evidence.

2. ***Assessment, outcome and reporting***
   Deferral requests are assessed in accordance with these procedures. The student is notified of the outcome in writing. The Admissions team is responsible for recording the decision in the student management system. For international students, the Admissions Manager must ensure that deferral decisions are reported in PRISMS where required and within the required legislative timeframes.

Where a deferral of commencement is approved or rejected for an international student, the Institution advises the student in writing to seek advice from the Department of Home Affairs on the potential impact on their student visa. It ensures the CoE in PRISMS reflects the intended commencement date following any approved deferral.

Table 1

Process	Responsibilities	Timeframe
Step 1 Submit deferral request		
1.1 **Before acceptance:** students who have received an offer but have not yet accepted it must complete the **ONLINE FORM**. 1.2 **After acceptance:** students who have accepted their offer – which for international students means accepted an offer, paid the tuition fees and have been issued a CoE – must submit a deferral request via the **ONLINE FORM** prior to 5pm, Friday of Orientation Week. The request must include the reasons for seeking a defer commencement date**.** 1.3 International students who have been granted a student visa must provide supporting documentary evidence detailing compassionate or compelling circumstances in support of their deferral request. 1.4 Compassionate or compelling circumstances for international students are assessed on a case-by-case basis using professional judgment and may include (but not limited to): a. serious illness or injury that prevents the student from commencing or undertaking study (including mental health); b. witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime; c. bereavement of a close family member (e.g., parent, grandparent); d. major political unrest or a natural disaster in the student's home country. 1.5 Supporting evidence provided by international students may include (but is not limited to): a. medical certificate or specialist letter from an AHPRA-registered practitioner (all medical evidence must be in accordance with the Student Medical Evidence Guidelines); b. death certificate; c. police report; or d. Evidence demonstrating an inability to commence studies on the scheduled course commencement date due to delays in student visa processing. 1.6 All supporting documentary evidence submitted by international students must be translated into English by a qualified or certified translator. Translations must be accurate, complete and accompanied by a statement of the translator's credentials and certification of accuracy. Translations by artificial intelligence or translations completed by non-qualified individuals will not be accepted. 1.7 For multiple deferral requests totalling up to 12 months, students must submit new applications and evidence each trimester. All deferral periods must be a minimum of one study period.	Admissions	Request deferral prior to 5pm, Friday of Orientation Week
Step 2 Assessment, outcome and reporting		

2.1 The Admissions team assesses all deferral requests and determines whether the request is approved or rejected. For international students required to provide evidence of compassionate or compelling reasons, the Admissions team determines whether the circumstances meet the requirements of the National Code and if the supporting documentary evidence is sufficient and appropriate. 2.2 A deferral request will be **rejected** where: a. for international students who have been granted a student visa, no compassionate or compelling circumstances are demonstrated, or insufficient evidence was provided; b. the Institution does not accept the reason(s) submitted in support of the deferral request; c. the requested deferral period exceeds the maximum allowable 12 months; or d. the request is received after commencement of the course in which case the student will be referred to the *Leave of Absence Procedures* where applicable. 2.3 Where a deferral request is approved, the Admissions team records the revised commencement date in the student management system and issues a Letter of Offer for the new study period. 2.4 International students must submit the signed acceptance of the new offer before a CoE is issued. 2.5 Domestic students must submit the signed acceptance of the new offer before Census Date of the new intake date. 2.6 For international students who have been issued a CoE but have not yet been granted a student visa, the Admissions team undertakes the following PRISMS reporting actions: a. Report the original CoE via Student Course Variation (SCV) as **non-commencement**, noting the student's reason for the deferral request in the comments field; b. Issue a new CoE with the new commencement date; and c. Initiate internal processes to align any tuition fee deposits with the new intake. 2.7 For international students who have been issued a CoE and have a been granted a student visa, the Admissions team commence reporting in PRISMS as follows: a. Report the original CoE via SCV as deferral/suspension of student enrolment with the reason type *compassionate or compelling circumstances*; b. Issue a new CoE with the revised commencement date; and c. Initiate internal processes to align any tuition fee deposits with the new intake. d. Issue the revised Letter of Offer and CoE (international students only) within two business days. 2.8 For **rejected** deferral requests: a. The Admissions team notifies the student in writing outlining the reasons for the decision; b. If student decides not to commence their studies at the original commencement date (and do not attend class before census), the Admissions team amends the student's record in the student management system to reflect non-commencement; and c. For international students with an issued CoE, the Admissions team reports the original CoE as cancelled for non-commencement in PRISMS. 2.8 All PRISMS reporting must be completed **within:** a. **14 days** after the deferral has been approved for students **under 18 years** of age; or b. **31 days** after the deferral has been approved students **above 18 years** of age. 2.9 Where a CoE is cancelled, the Admissions team notifies international students in writing that their CoE has been cancelled. The student is advised to contact the Department of Home Affairs if their student visa has already been granted, as their visa status may be affected. The communication also provides details regarding how to reapply for admission at a later date, where applicable.	Admissions	Letter of Offer or outcome issued as soon as practicable

4. Reporting

Requests to defer commencement of a course from international students are reported in PRISMS where appropriate, as detailed in Table 1.

5. Records management

As detailed in Table 1, all deferral requests and related decisions are recorded in the Institution's student management system. Where applicable, statutory reporting is completed in PRISMS. All records of the deferral request are retained for two years after the student ceases to be an accepted student, in accordance with the Records Management and Personal Information Procedures

6. Related documents

Admissions Policy

Admissions Guidebook

Admissions Procedures

Leave of Absence Procedures

7. Version history

Summary of changes	**Approved by**	**Approval date**
	EMG	2 December 2019
	EMG	22 November 2021

Changes include: Title change from Deferral Procedures A deferral may be taken as a single deferral of up to 12 months or multiple deferrals that cumulatively do not exceed 12 months. Each deferral period must be a minimum of one study period Requests must be submitted by prior to 5pm, Friday of Orientation Week. For multiple deferral requests totalling up to 12 months, students must submit new applications and evidence each trimester. All deferral periods must be a minimum of one study period. International students must submit the signed acceptance of the new offer before a CoE is issued. Domestic students must submit the signed acceptance of the new offer before Census Date of the new intake date. Responsibilities changed from recruitment to admissions	EMG	

Cross reference to the new Student Medical Evidence Procedures added	4 June 2026 (approved 28 May 2026)	EMG