

## Student Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Policy and Procedures

### 1. Scope

This Policy and Procedure applies to all prospective and current international students at Oxford House (OHC) and the staff involved in the assessment and process of student deferral, suspension and cancellation.

### 2. Purpose

The Policy and Procedures provides information on:

- 2.1 How and when students' enrolment can be varied.
- 2.2 The processes that need to be followed in varying a student's enrolment.

### 3. Definitions

- 3.1 **Deferral** is a postponement of commencement of a course.
- 3.2 **Suspension** is the temporary postponement of enrolment during a course.
- 3.3 **Cancellation** refers to a cessation of enrolment in a course.
- 3.4 **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:
  - a) Serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes;
  - b) Bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents;
  - c) Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel when this has impacted on the student's studies;
  - d) A traumatic experience which includes:
    - i. Involvement in or witnessing of a serious accident, or
    - ii. Witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime
  - e) When this has impacted on the student these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports.
  - f) Inability to begin studying on the course commencement date stated on the CoE due to delay in receiving a student visa.

### 4. Policy Statement

- 4.1 All deferral, suspension and cancellation decisions will be made in accordance with this Policy and Procedures and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (the National Code).
- 4.2 Deferral, suspension and cancellation of enrolment may be initiated by a student or by OHC.
- 4.3 References in this policy to "Letter of Offer", "Confirmation of Enrolment", "Student Visa", "the National Code" and "Department of Home Affairs" apply to international students only.

## **5. Procedures**

### **Student Initiated Deferral, Suspension or Cancellation**

- 5.1 Students wishing to defer, suspend or cancel their enrolment must contact Student Services and submit the completed Student Request to Defer, Suspend or Cancel a Course Form. The Form is available via Blackboard, Student Services and upon request.
- 5.2 Supporting documents verifying the compassionate and compelling circumstances must be provided together with the application.
- 5.3 The student must meet one of the compassionate and compelling reasons listed in the Definitions of this Policy and Procedures.
- 5.4 Deferring, suspending or cancelling an enrolment may affect a student's visa where applicable. OHC will advise the student to contact Immigration to seek advice on any potential impacts on their visa, including the need to obtain a new visa.
- 5.5 Once an application is received, OHC will:
  - a) Acknowledge the application;
  - b) Assess the application and make a decision within ten (10) working days;
  - c) Where an application is successful OHC will notify the student of the outcome in writing and update enrolment information in the Providers Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) database and OHC's Student Management System. The international student will also be advised to seek advice from the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) of the potential impact on their visa;
  - d) Where an application is unsuccessful, OHC will notify the student of the outcome in writing and inform them of the reason for the decision as well as their right to access OHC's complaints and appeals process within 20 working days of the decision.
- 5.6 All decisions to defer, suspend or cancel an international student's enrolment will be recorded in PRISMS and the student's file.

### **Student Initiated Deferral**

- 5.7 A new student may defer their enrolment only once, subject to OHC's prior approval.
- 5.8 OHC will generally allow new students to defer the commencement of their course to the following trimester.
- 5.9 Students should note that tuition fees and administrative fees may change when and if a new Letter of Offer is provided.
- 5.10 When the deferral is processed the student will receive a revised Letter of Offer and Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) upon OHC's receipt of the student signed Acceptance of the revised Letter of Offer.

### **Student Initiated Suspension**

- 5.11 While it is not advised, in some situations students may need to, or may request to, take leave of absence during a study period. Student should contact OHC if they:
  - a) Wish to take leave of absence from class for 5 or more consecutive days; or
  - b) Expect to miss the start of a course of study.
- 5.12 If a student needs to be absent for an extended period and is unable to maintain their academic progress, they may need to discuss suspending their studies with OHC staff.
- 5.13 All applications to suspend study must be submitted at least fourteen (14) days prior to the proposed suspension date.
- 5.14 The maximum suspension period is for one (1) study period (i.e. 12 weeks). Extensions beyond this time will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and on OHC's complete discretion.
- 5.15 When suspension is granted, the existing CoE will be cancelled by OHC and the cancellation be recorded in PRISMS. Student must notify OHC at least 2 weeks prior to

the commencement of a study period for a new CoE. The reinstatement of a new CoE will be subject to the availability of OHC at the time of request.

### **Student Initiated Cancellation**

- 5.16 A student can cancel their enrolment with OHC in writing.
- 5.17 Students should be aware that financial consequences may apply in accordance with the student's written agreement (signed Letter of Offer and Acceptance) and OHC's Refund Policy.

### **OHC Initiated Deferral, Suspension or Cancellation**

- 5.18 OHC may defer the commencement of a course when a course is not offered.
- 5.19 OHC may cancel or suspend a student's enrolment for:
  - a) Misconduct – where behaviour of a student;
    - i. Has been in serious breach of an institute rule;
    - ii. Is in breach of enrolment conditions;
    - iii. Is considered to provide a threat to the wellbeing of other students or staff; or
    - iv. Failing to meet the requirements of the Monitoring Course Progress and Attendance Policy (and Standard 8 of the National Code).
  - b) Non-payment of tuition fees; or
  - c) Non-commencement or non-reenrolment in a compulsory study period.
- 5.20 Where a decision has been made by OHC to cancel or suspend a student's enrolment, OHC will issue to the affected student written notification of OHC's intention to cancel or suspend the student's enrolment. The notification will clearly set out the reasons for OHC's intention to make a decision to cancel or suspend the student's enrolment and inform the student that he/she has the right to appeal OHC's decision through its internal appeal process within twenty (20) working days from the date of the notice.
- 5.21 If the affected student elects to access OHC's internal appeal process, OHC will maintain the student's enrolment (including in PRISMS) until the internal appeal process is completed.
- 5.22 If there is clear evidence that the affected student's health or wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, is likely to be at risk unless the cancellation or suspension is effected immediately, OHC will cancel or suspend the student's enrolment prior to the internal appeal process being completed.
- 5.23 If a student does not commence a course or does not reenrol in a compulsory study period (without prior approval) the student will be deemed to have notified cessation of studies and the relevant COE/s will be cancelled without further notice.
- 5.24 OHC will report student course variation reasons on PRISMS within 31 days of student leaving OHC for a student above 18 years of age.

## **6. Under 18 Student Variation of Enrolment**

- 6.1 All students under 18 years of age wishing to defer, suspend or cancel their course must in addition to the above requirements supply a written request from their parent or legal guardian at the time of application.
- 6.2 Adequate welfare and accommodation arrangements must be in place before any modification of their enrolment will occur.
- 6.3 When OHC seeks to vary an U18 student's enrolment, a copy of the notice of Intent to Defer, Suspend or Cancel Enrolment will be forwarded to the parents or legal guardian. OHC will liaise with the parents or legal guardian to achieve the best possible outcome.
- 6.4 OHC will continue to check the suitability of accommodation and welfare arrangements until:

- a) The student has been accepted by another registered provider and that the registered provider takes over responsibility for approving the student's accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements;
  - b) The student leaves Australia;
  - c) Other suitable arrangements are made that satisfy migration regulations; or
  - d) OHC reports to DHA via PRISMS that it can no longer approve the arrangements of the student.
- 6.5 OHC will report student course variation reasons on PRISMS within 14 days of student leaving OHC for a student under 18 years of age.