


ACA Policy and Procedure			
Doc #: PP - 2.6		Title: Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation of Student Enrolment	
Standards: 7.5	NC: 9		
Rev #: 13		Approved By: Head of Student Services	Date: 17/12/2024

1.0 Purpose

The policy and procedure outlines the principles that underpin the College's approach to cancellation, deferment and suspension of students' enrolment.

It also defines the circumstances for the application of deferment, suspension, leave from studies or cancellation of enrolment when instigated by either student or the College.

The policy and procedure also ensures that the reporting obligations under Paragraph 19 of the ESOS Act (2000) are timely met.

The procedure explains the sequence in processing a student's application for deferment, suspension, a leave from studies or cancellation of enrolment when instigated by either student or the College. The procedure also covers the reporting obligations under Paragraph 19 of the ESOS Act.

2.0 Scope

This policy and procedure applies to ACA Student Services and Marketing staff who are involved in these requests and to international students holding a Student Visa. The College can only defer or temporarily suspend the enrolment of the student on the grounds of compassionate or compelling circumstances (such as illness where a medical certificate states that the student is unable to attend classes), or misbehaviour by the student.


3.0 Definitions

3.1 Deferment or suspension of enrolment means to *temporarily put studies on hold* (adjourn, delay, postpone). Providers do this by notifying the Department of Education, through PRISMS of the deferment or suspension of enrolment. A student may request a temporary deferment or suspension to their enrolment on the grounds of compassionate or compelling circumstances. A provider may also initiate suspension of a student's enrolment due to misbehaviour of the student, non-payment of fees, and/or unsatisfactory course progress.

For the purpose of this policy and procedure the College defines the following to determine the types of deferment or suspension.

3.1a Deferment – A request received from the student, prior to the commencement of the course, to temporarily postpone the commencement of such course. (Student initiated deferment of enrolment).

3.1b Leave of Absence (LOA) – A request by the student to temporarily suspend the course after the commencement of such course (Student initiated suspension of enrolment).

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Important Note: The maximum duration for an approved Leave of Absence (LOA) is six (6) months (two terms). LOA beyond six months must be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Group General Manager, Vocational (International).

3.1c Suspension – When the enrolment of a student in the course of study is suspended for a period of time for compassionate or compelling reasons, after which the student may recommence the course (College initiated suspension of enrolment).

3.2 Withdrawal – A request by the student to withdraw, or to cancel the course, at any time (Student initiated cancellation of enrolment).


3.3 Cancellation – Cancellation of the student enrolment at the College which will lead to the cancellation of the Electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE), for international students. Please refer to section 5.10 below (College initiated cancellation of enrolment).

3.4 Extenuating Circumstances – As per the National Code, relating to the welfare of the student may include, but are not limited to the following. 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.

3.8 Compassionate or Compelling Circumstances – As per the National Code, are circumstances 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; or
- a traumatic experience which could include:
 - involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or
 - witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, and this has impacted on the student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists’ reports);
- where the registered provider was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit; or

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- inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa.

Important Notes:

- Postponing studies for a study period to go home to be married is not normally considered to be a compassionate or compelling circumstance which is beyond the control of the student. It is recommended that student plans wedding during the term breaks.
- In a packaged course, the student’s inability to complete their preceding course(s) is NOT normally considered to be a compassionate or compelling circumstance which is beyond the control of the student.

3.9 Misbehaviour or Undesirable Behaviour – Behaviour that is unacceptable for an education setting. This could include but not limited to:

- physical violence (or risk of physical violence) towards other students or staff;
- criminal activity;
- unsolicited attention towards another student or member of staff;
- academic and non-academic misconduct.

4.0 Responsibilities


4.1 Marketing Manager (MM) – Processes deferment of studies request before commencement of the course.

4.2 Student Support Officer (SSO) – Processes student’s withdrawal request and makes the necessary changes on PRISMS. If applicable, processes related refund of fees as per the College’s refund policy.

4.3 Student Services Officer (SS) – Processes leave of absence, suspension and cancellation of student enrolment. A designated Students Services Officer processes suspension of student enrolment and makes necessary changes in PRISMS.

4.4 Designated Head, Student Services (DH (SS)) – Responsible for the dissemination of the policy and procedure to the heads of departments, the student services team, and the students. Ensures that legislations and regulations and the policies and procedures are complied with by designated officers processing leaves and withdrawals. DH-SS also approves cancellation of student enrolment, suspension and deferrals.

4.5 Department Head of Marketing (DH-M) – Responsible for ensuring that legislations and regulations and the policies and procedures are complied with by the marketing team/designated officers processing deferrals.

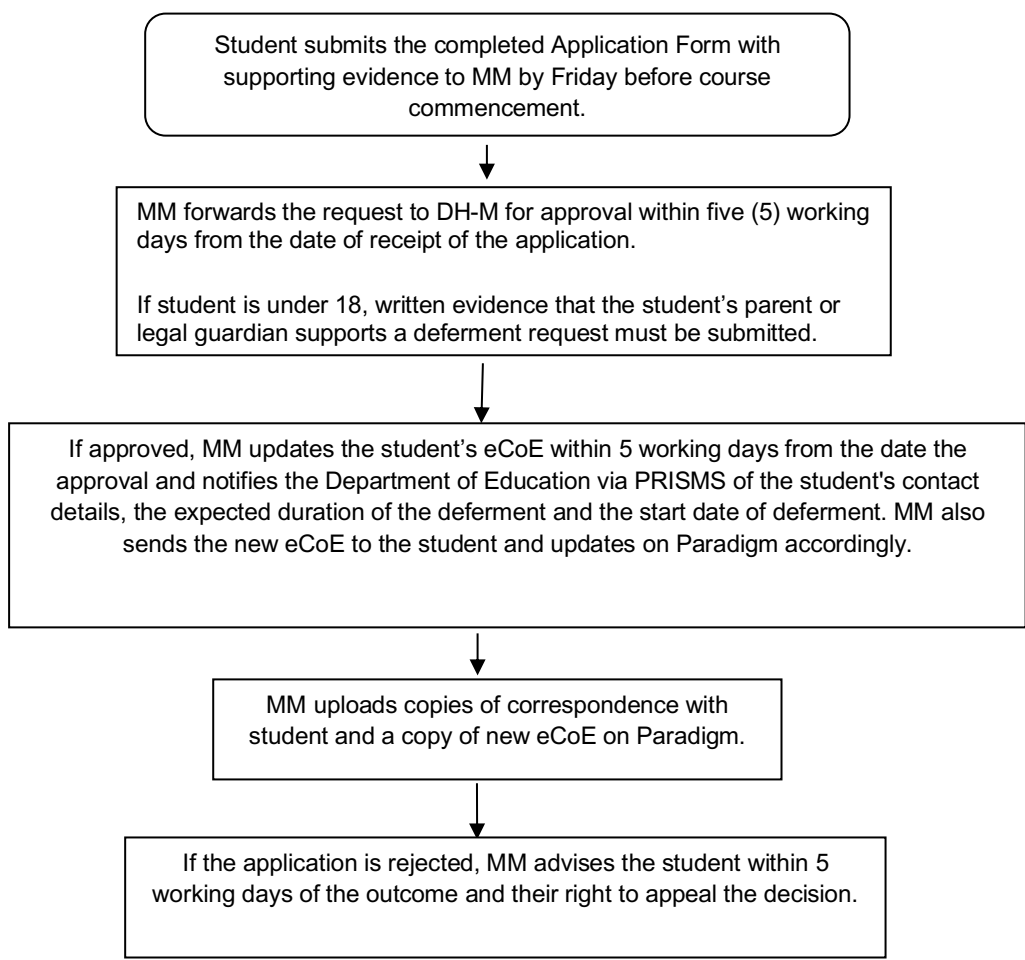
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4.6 Marketing Managers (MM) and Marketing Officers – Responsible for processing deferral requests in compliance with legislations, regulations, and policies and procedures.

4.7 General Manager, Vocational (International) – Responsible for approving LOA requests beyond six months (two terms).

5.0 Procedure

5.1 Procedure Flowchart – Deferral (Student initiated deferment of enrolment)



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5.2 Flowchart details – Deferral (Student initiated deferment of enrolment)

5.2.1 Student submits the completed Application to Defer Course Commencement Form with supporting evidence to MM by Friday before course commencement.


5.2.2 MM forwards the request to DH-M for approval within five (5) working days from the date of receipt of the application.

- If student is under 18, written evidence that the student’s parent or legal guardian supports a deferment request must be submitted.

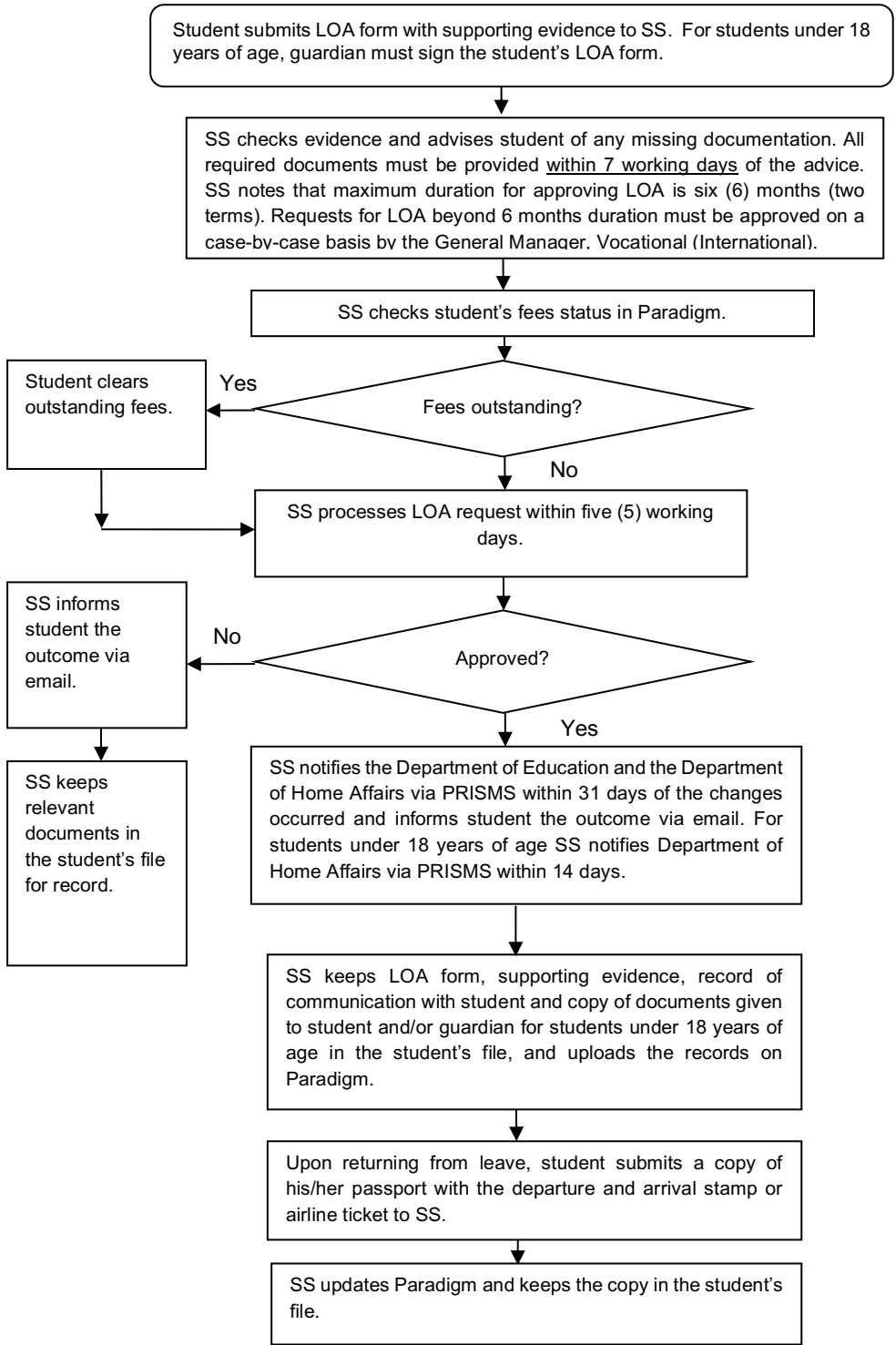
5.2.3 If approved, MM updates the student’s eCoE within 5 working days from the date of approval and notifies the Department of Education via PRISMS of the student's contact details, the expected duration of the deferment and the start date of deferment. MM also sends the new eCoE to the student and updates the Student Management System (Paradigm) accordingly.


5.2.4 MM uploads copies of correspondence with student and a copy of new eCoE on Paradigm.

5.2.5 If the application is rejected, MM advises the student within 5 working days of the outcome and their right to appeal the decision. For details on the appeals process, refer to Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

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5.3 Procedure Flowchart – Leave of Absence (Student-initiated suspension of enrolment)



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5.4 Flowchart details – Leave of Absence (Student-initiated suspension of enrolment)

5.4.1 Student completes LOA form and submits it with supporting evidence (e.g. medical certificate from a registered medical practitioner, death certificate, return airline tickets) to SS. For students under 18 years of age, the form must be signed by the guardian.

5.4.2 SS checks evidence provided with the LOA form and advises the student of any missing documentation. All required documents must be provided within 7 working days of the advice. Failure to do so may result in the LOA being disapproved.

Note:

- If student is under 18, written evidence that the student’s parent or legal guardian supports a LOA request must be submitted.
- The maximum duration of approving LOA is six (6) months (two terms). SS must ensure that requests for LOA beyond six months must be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Group General Manager, Vocational (International).


5.4.3 SS checks student’s fees status in Paradigm. If fees are outstanding, student clears outstanding fees before LOA is granted. Any fees falling during the leave period has to be paid by the due date even if the student is on leave.

Note: Students applying for maternity leave may request to arrange for a payment plan.

5.4.4 SS processes LOA request in accordance with defined compassionate or compelling circumstances within five (5) working days. The student is informed about the outcome via email.

- When approved, SS issues LOA Approval Letter and updates student details in Paradigm.
- When not approved, SS issues LOA Non- Approval Letter and enters notes on Paradigm. SS informs student the outcome via email (attach LOA Non-Approval Letter) and keeps documents to student file for record. Where a student needs to take a break from studies but does not have compassionate or compelling circumstances, the student needs to withdraw from the course and re-apply when the student is ready to return to study.

The communication to student should also include the following, where applicable:

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- Advice on how the leave from studies may affect student visa.
- Student's right to appeal against the decision in accordance with the College's Complaints and Appeals Policy.

5.4.5 For approved LOA application affecting the course duration, SS notifies the Department of Education and the Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS within 31 days of the changes. For students under 18 years of age SS notifies the Department of Education and the Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS within 14 days. The last day of reporting will be at the end of the 14-day requirement and informs the student/guardian.


Note: In addition to the student's contact details and the expected duration of the leave of absence, SS provides the leave of absence start date in PRISMS.

5.4.6 SS keeps LOA form, supporting evidence, record of communication with student and copy of documents given to student in the student's file and uploads the records on Paradigm.

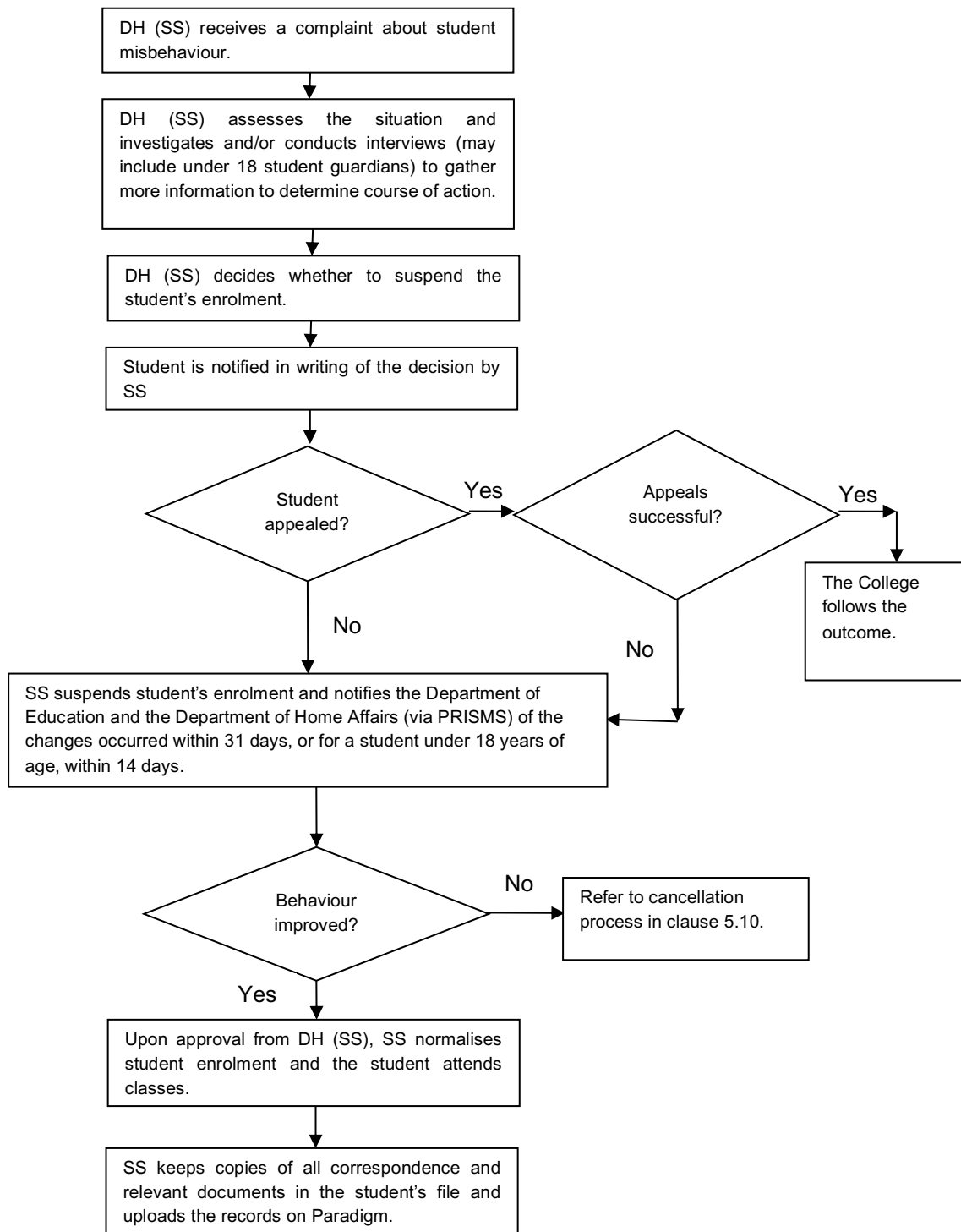
5.4.7 Upon returning from LOA, student submits a copy of their passport with the departure and arrival stamp or airline ticket to SS if applicable.


Important Note: Failure to return from LOA within 5 working days of the date the leave finishes is considered a notification of withdrawal from the student.

5.4.8 SS updates Paradigm and keeps the copy in the student's file.

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5.5 Procedure Flowchart – Suspension (College-initiated Suspension of Enrolment)



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5.6 Flowchart Details – Suspension (College-initiated Suspension of Enrolment)

5.6.1 DH (SS) is made aware or receives a complaint about student misbehaviour.

5.6.2 DH (SS) assesses the situation and investigates and/or conducts interviews (may include under 18 student guardians) to gather more information to determine course of action.

5.6.3 DH (SS) decides whether to suspend the student's enrolment.

5.6.4 Student and guardian for students under 18 years of age are notified in writing of the decision. Notification must include:

- suspension may have an impact on student visa;
- 20 working days in which to access the internal appeals process;
- external appeals process (Overseas Student Ombudsman).

5.6.5 Student may appeal against the decision. The suspension cannot take effect until the internal and external appeals processes are completed unless extenuating circumstances relating to student welfare apply.


5.6.6 SS suspends student's enrolment and notifies the Department of Education and the Department of Home Affairs (via PRISMS) of the changes occurred within 31 days, or **for a student under 18 years of age, within 14 days**.

Note: In addition to the student's contact details and the expected duration of the suspension, SS provides the start date of suspension in PRISMS.

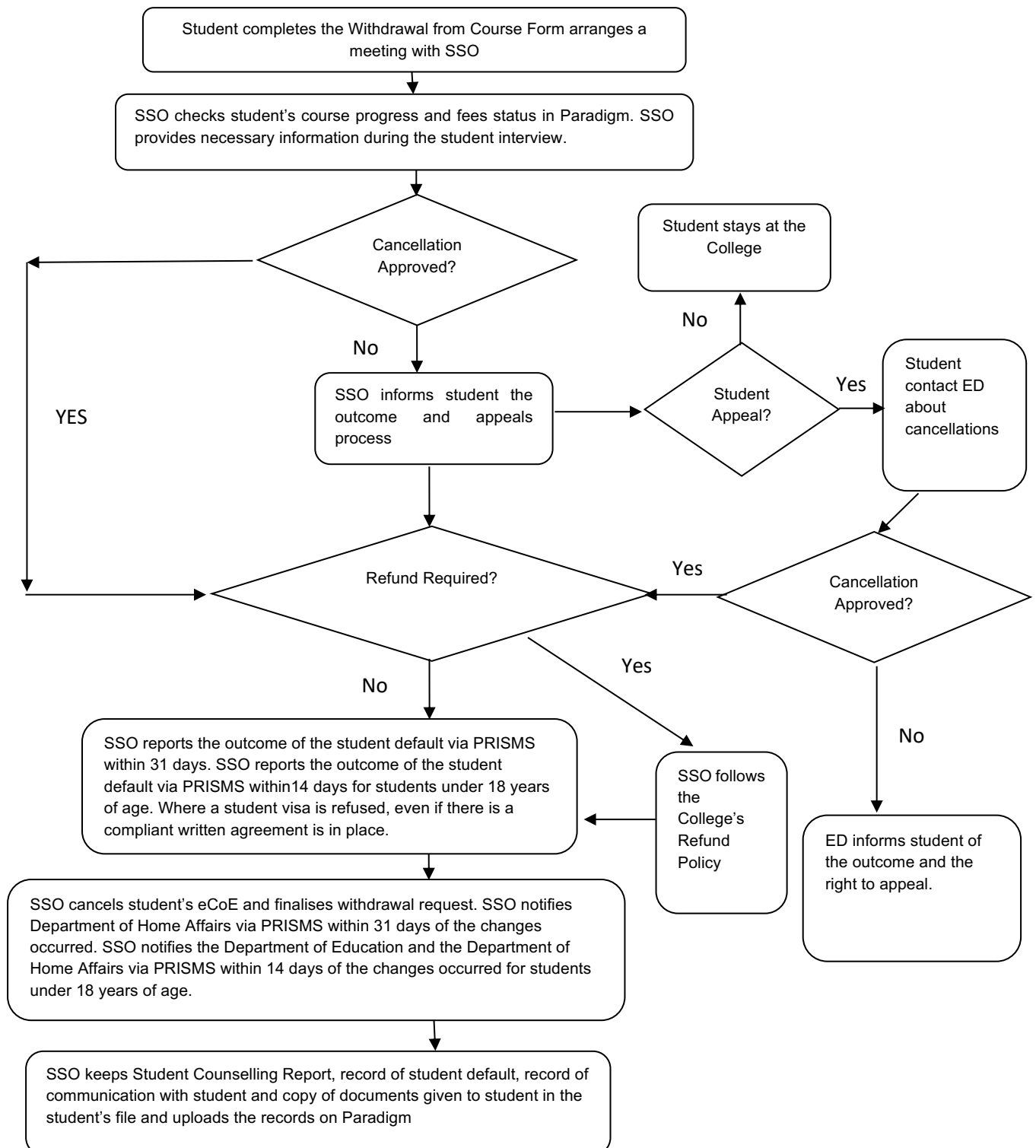
5.6.7 If student's behaviour improves, upon approval of DH (SS), SS normalises student enrolment. Then student attends classes.


Note: If student's behaviour does not improve, refer to cancellation process in clause 5.10.

5.6.8 SS keeps copies of all correspondence and relevant documents in the student's file and uploads the records on Paradigm.

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5.7 Procedure Flowchart – Withdrawal (Student-initiated Cancellation of Enrolment)



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5.8 Flowchart details – Withdrawal (Student-initiated Cancellation of Enrolment)

5.8.1 Student completes the Withdrawal from Course Form and arranges a meeting with SSO.

5.8.2 SSO checks student’s course progress and fees status in Paradigm. If fees are outstanding, the student is then requested to clear outstanding fees. SSO interviews the student to understand the reasons for the request for cancellation. If it is in relation to an academic issue, SSO advises the student to contact the Student Advisor. If the student wishes to move to another state or another college (including ACA College), SSO will brief the student about the transfer process as per the Transfer to Another Registered Provider Policy. SSO completes a Student Counselling Report.

5.8.3 SSO informs student and the guardian of an under 18 student about the outcome of the request in accordance with the College’s Complaints and Appeals Policy via email. Otherwise, SSO reports the outcome of the student default via PRISMS within 31 days or, **for under 18 students, within 14 days.**

5.8.4 SSO checks if refund of fees is required. If required, SSO follows the College’s Refund Policy.

5.8.5 SSO cancels student’s eCoE and finalises withdrawal request on its individual merits. SSO notifies the Department of Education and the Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS of the changes occurred, including the day the student’s studies were terminated and the last day of studies, within 31 days or, **for under 18 students, within 14 days.**

5.8.6 SSO keeps Student Counselling Report, record of student default, record of communication with student and copy of documents given to student in the student’s file and uploads the records on Paradigm.


Important Note: Failure to start the course on commencement date or enrol in subjects by the second week of the term is considered a notification of withdrawal¹ from the student.

¹ PRISMS Reporting Quick Reference Guide

*Student notifies cessation of studies **


Select this option when the student has actively (or inactively) advised you that they will not be continuing their studies with you. 'Inactive' advice may be where the student just does not return after an arranged holiday break, suspension or deferment, or fails to enrol in any subjects for a compulsory study period. This variation report will set the status of the CoE to 'Cancelled'.

This Student Course Variation reason must be completed within 14 days of the notification where the student is under 18 years of age and within 31 days for a student above 18 years of age.

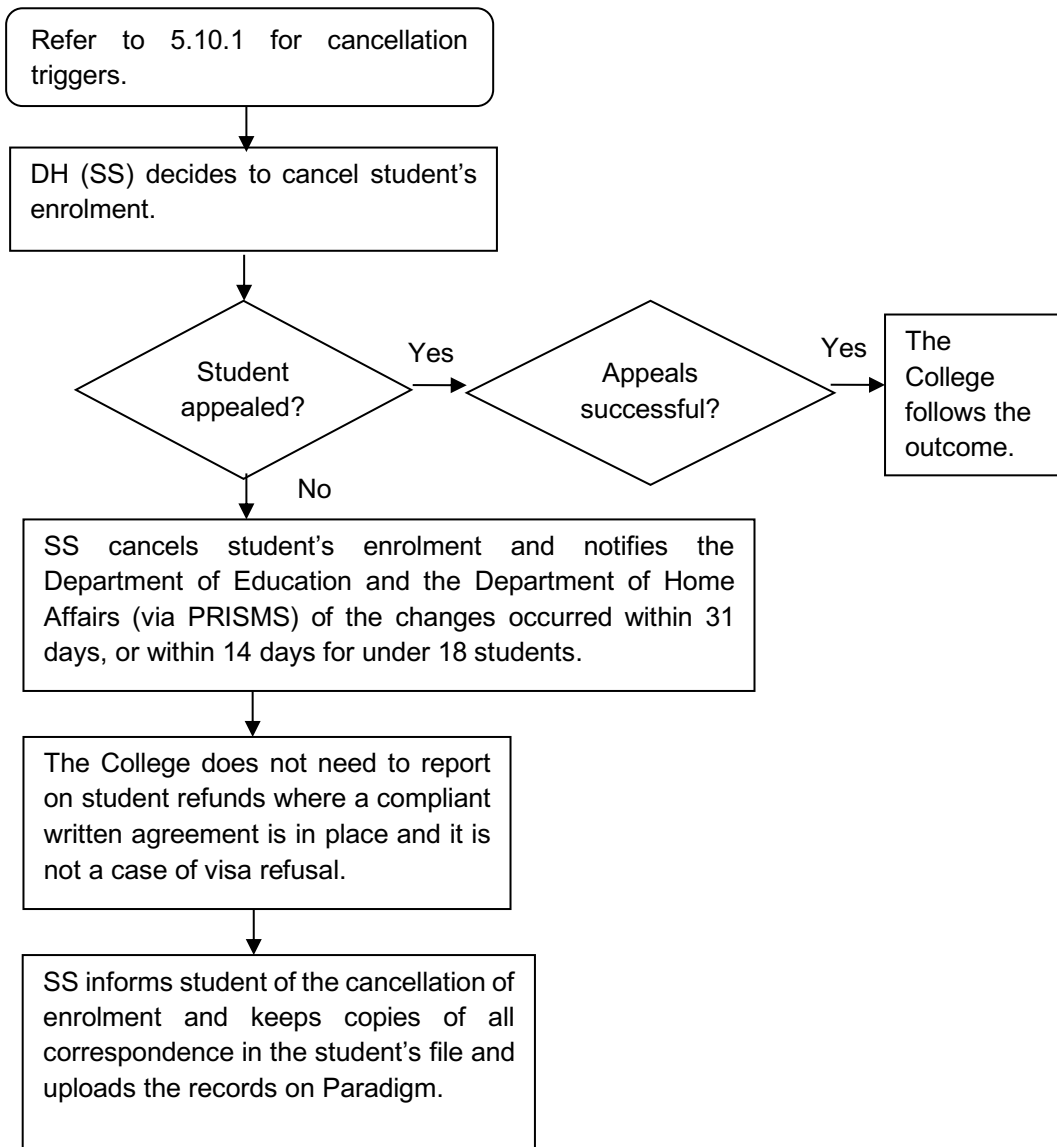
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Students must enrol subjects as specified in their timetables on Paradigm within the first two (2) weeks of each term. Students who fail to do so may have their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) cancelled. Students may appeal this decision by the end of week 4 of the term. If the appeal is successful, students are required to pay \$300 re-enrolment fee (also referred to reinstatement fee) in order to re-enrol in their course. All tuition fees must also be up to date in order to re-enrol.

The CoE must be at the status of 'Studying' or 'Cancelled' for you to select this reason. In the SCV Comments field, include the reason for cancellation of enrolment, the date the enrolment was cancelled and other relevant information.

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5.9 Procedure Flowchart – Cancellation (College-initiated Cancellation of Enrolment)



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5.10 Flowchart Details – Cancellation (College-initiated Cancellation of Enrolment)

5.10.1 The college will initiate cancellation of student enrolment if:

- a. the student failed to pay fees (non-payment of fees);
- b. the student breached a condition of the student visa;
- c. the student misbehaved (when student has committed serious misbehaviour such as criminal activity or non-serious misbehaviour repeatedly after suspension).

5.10.2 DH (SS) decides to cancel student’s enrolment, after being satisfied that due process has been given to student.

5.10.3 When cancellation is due to the reasons stated in 5.10.1, the student is notified in writing of the decision.


- Notification includes:
 - Cancellation may have an impact on student visa;
 - 20 working days in which to access the internal appeals process
 - External appeals process (Overseas Student Ombudsman).

5.10.4 Student may appeal against the decision. The cancellation cannot take effect until the internal and external appeals processes are completed unless extenuating circumstances relating to student welfare apply.

5.10.5 SS notifies the Department of Education and the Department of Home Affairs (via PRISMS) of the student default, including the day the student’s studies were terminated and the last day of study, within 31 working days or **within 14 days for under 18 years of age**, after internal appeal period (20 working days) or any appeals finding in favour of the original decision to cancel.

5.10.5.1 Where the student has accessed the internal appeals process against the College’s decision to cancel the student’s enrolment, and the outcome of the internal appeals process is not in favour of the student, the termination date will be the day after the decision is concluded.

5.10.5.2 Where the student has accessed the external appeals process against the College’s decision to cancel the student’s enrolment, and the outcome of the external appeal process is in favour of the College, the termination date will be the day after the decision is concluded.

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5.10.5.3 Where the student has not appealed the decision, the termination date will be the 21st working day after the student was issued a written notice of intent to terminate their studies.

5.10.5.4 Where the College determines that extenuating circumstances apply (i.e. student misbehaviour) and that the termination of studies needs to take effect before an outcome of an appeals process has been reached, or prior to the expiry of the appeal period, the termination date of the student’s studies is the date when the determination was made by the College.

5.10.6 SS informs student of the cancellation of enrolment in writing and keeps copies of all correspondence and record of student default in the student’s file.


5.11 Student Default

5.11.1 As per section 47A of the ESOS Act, an overseas student or intending overseas student defaults, in relation to a course at a location, if:

- the course starts at the location on the agreed starting day, but the student does not start the course on that day (and has not previously withdrawn);
- the student withdraws from the course at the location (either before or after the agreed starting date);
- the student failed to pay an amount payable to the provider for the course;
- the student breached a condition of the student visa;
- the student misbehaves.

5.12 Notification of Withdrawal

5.12.1 After commencement of the course, at least one full term’s notice in writing is required of a student’s intention to withdraw from a course. If less than one term’s notice is given, in addition to the student receiving no refund of the course fees they have already paid, the student has an obligation to pay the following term’s fees in lieu of the required notice. No certification documentation (which includes but is not limited to certificates, statement of attainment, transcript of records) will be issued until all outstanding fees are settled.

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5.13 Giving Information About Accepted Students

5.13.1 A registered provider must give the Department of Education and the Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS the following information within 31 days or within 14 days for under 18 students after the event specified below occurs:


- the name and any other prescribed details of each person who becomes an accepted student of that provider.
- for each person who becomes an accepted student—the name, start date and expected duration of the course for which the student is accepted;
- the prescribed information about an accepted student who does not begin a course when expected.
- any termination of an accepted student’s studies (whether as a result of action by the student or the provider or otherwise) before the student’s course is completed.
- any change in the identity or duration of an accepted student’s course;
- any other prescribed matter relating to accepted students.

5.13.2 A registered provider must give the Department of Education and the Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS particulars of any breach by an accepted student of a prescribed condition of a student visa as soon as practicable after the breach occurs. Student’s contact details and residential address in Australia and their residential address overseas must also be provided to the Department of Education and the Department of Home Affairs via PRISMS.

5.13.3 A registered provider must give particulars of a breach by a student under subsection (5.13.2) even if the student has ceased to be an accepted student of the provider.

6.0 References

- 6.1 Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- 6.2 Refund Policy
- 6.3 PRISMS Provider User Guide
- 6.4 Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Regulations 2019

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7.0 Appendices

- 7.1 Approved Leave of Absence Letter Template
- 7.2 Not Approved Leave of Absence Letter Template
- 7.3 Leave of Absence Request Form
- 7.4 Student Counselling Report Form