

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Section 10 – Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Policy

The following section outlines policies and procedures to defer, suspend or cancel your studies.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the circumstances in which ALG allow students to either:

- a) defer commencement of study or
- b) temporarily suspend their studies, including granting a leave of absence,
- c) cancel the studies.

ALG can also initial the deferral, suspension or cancellation of students' enrolment due to:

- a) misbehaviour of students;
- b) student's failure to pay the required amount to undertake or continue the course as stated in the Offer Letter;
- c) a breach of course progress or attendance requirements by the student.

This policy applies to all onshore students who are enrolled with one of ALG courses.

This policy also applies to all staff members that will process or approve the students' cancellation or suspension of enrolment.

Deferral or Suspension Initiated by the student

A student may request a temporary deferment or suspension to his/her enrolment on the grounds of compassionate or compelling circumstances.

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 or medical condition (including pregnancy), 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:
 - o involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or
 - o 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
- inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa.

Students can apply for a deferral or suspension and should complete the Deferment Request Form through this [link](#).

Students can defer their studies a maximum of (2) two times. Each deferral can be granted for no more than (1) one term unless course structure requires a longer deferment period.

As a condition of deferral processing, students must ensure all supporting documentation is provided at the time of submission. The College reserves the right to reject an application in case no sufficient supporting documentation is provided.

Students who submit a deferral must remain enrolled and attend all classes as per usual (if they are able to) until the process has been completed and student notified, as follows:

- a) If the deferment or suspension **is granted**, ALG will report the changes on PRISMS and the student will be notified of the result.
- b) If the deferment or suspension **is not granted**, the student will be notified of the result and will be given 20 working days of the notification to enter with the Complaints and Appeals process. For more information, please refer to [Complaints and Appeal Policy](#).

Please note that the examples above are only some examples of what may be considered compassionate or compelling circumstances. ALG will use our professional judgement and assess each case on its individual merits. When determining whether compassionate or compelling circumstances exist, ALG will consider documentary evidence provided to support the claim and should keep copies of these documents in the student's file.

Students who defer their studies can receive a transfer of course fees paid for an upcoming term as credit to a subsequent term of studies, if they notify ALG that they are deferring their studies before term has commenced. This is defined as being before the first Monday of the term they wish to defer (as per the published date on our timetable). If term has commenced, the student can still defer but course fee credit is no longer available, and students are not eligible for a refund of tuition fees.

As a condition of deferral processing, students must ensure all outstanding fees, including miscellaneous fees, are paid.

Deferrals, suspensions or cancellations of enrolment initiated by ALG

ALG may suspend or cancel an international student's enrolment on the basis of, but not limited to:

- serious misconduct by the student;
- bullying and/or harassment conducted by the student;
- the student's failure to pay the required amount to undertake or continue the course as stated in their Offer Letter or Fee Payment Agreement;
- the student's failure to commence their studies as planned and to make any contact with ALG since the start date of their course; or
- breach of course progress or attendance requirements by the international student.

Students who do not commence their studies will be identified at the end of Week 2 of the term. Students who have had any contact with ALG since the start date of their course will be deemed as a non-commencing student.

Non-commencing students will be contacted via email at the beginning of Week 3 and given 5 business days to indicate their intention to commence studies. Students who do not respond within the 5 day period will have their enrolment cancelled by ALG. For more details refer to ALG student course progress policy and procedure.

After making a decision to suspend or cancel studies of a student, ALG must inform the student of its intention to suspend or cancel the student's enrolment and notify the student that he or she has 20 working days to access ALG's internal complaints and appeals process.

If the student decides to access ALG's internal complaints and appeals process, the suspension or cancellation of the student's enrolment cannot take effect until the internal process is completed, unless extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student apply. In this case, ALG will maintain the student's enrolment until the internal appeals process is completed (and has supported the provider's intention to suspend or cancel the student's enrolment).

'Maintain the student's enrolment' means that ALG does not notify the department of Home Affairs of any change to the student's enrolment status through PRISMS.

'Extenuating circumstances' relating to the welfare of the student may include but are not limited to, if 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.

Any claim of extenuating circumstances will need to be supported by appropriate evidence.

The student may choose to access an external appeal process as per ALG's internal complaints and appeals policy, but ALG does not have to wait for the outcome of an external appeal in cases of misbehaviour and non-payment before notifying the department of Home Affairs of the change to the student's enrolment status.

If the student's appeal is approved and a decision is made not to cancel or defer the student's enrolment, ALG will determine an Intervention Strategy to ensure that the student do not repeat the behaviour/breach.

Retrospective Deferment

A retrospective deferment can be initiated by ALG where circumstances have not allowed the student to request a deferment, i.e. accident or injury and the student was unable to contact the provider following the accident.

In this case ALG may initiate a deferment as a course of action which is then confirmed with the student when he/she returns to their study and requests the suspension.

A deferral or suspension retrospectively cannot be actioned unless there are unusual circumstances where it may be required that compassionate and compelling circumstances exist.

Deferral and Cancellation Effect on Studies Program

Students should note that a deferral or suspension can affect their original study program and options to when they are able to return to your studies.

For classroom programs, typically ALG conducts its training in cycles. This means that students will, in general, need to study consecutive terms of study in order to complete all cycles within a qualification.

For example:

Term 1 – Cycle A

Term 2 – Cycle B

Term 3 – Cycle C

Term 4 – Cycle D

If a student studies with no interruptions, they successfully complete all cycles. A student can also complete cycles in any order – they may enrol in Term 2 – Cycle B, which means they finish with Term 1 Cycle A as their final term of study.

If a student defers, this cycle may be affected. For example:

Term 1 – Cycle A – completed

Term 2 – Cycle B – deferral

Term 3 – Cycle C – completed

Term 4 – Cycle D – completed

This means the student has not completed Cycle B. This does not affect their learning. However, this may affect a student's course duration. The next time Cycle B is offered is Term 2 of the following year. The student will need to extend their course in order to complete Cycle B when it is next offered.

There may be other options available in order to assist students in completing their course. Students are advised to discuss how their request for deferral or suspension will impact their return to studies with a Student Advisors before making any decisions.

Deferrals and Suspensions

The period of deferral or suspension of enrolment (as entered in PRISMS) is not included in attendance monitoring calculations.

Deferrals and suspensions of enrolment can also be based on unavailability of units or study modules. This is considered a compelling reason. Before granting such a request, ALG must inform the student that suspending his or her enrolment may affect his or her Student visa.

When a student requests suspension of enrolment under Standard 9 of the National Code, the provider will notify the department of Home Affairs through PRISMS of the change to enrolment status. As the student's course end date is likely to be affected by the suspension (unless the student can 'catch up'), the student will need to apply for a Student visa extension before the current visa expires.

If the student cannot 'catch up' on the course requirements within the period covered by the Student visa, i.e. the end date of their course is extended, the student must apply for a new one before their existing visa expires. This will be at the student's expense.

When structuring a return to studies from a deferment or suspension, ALG may plan a study program not equivalent to a full-time study load if this means a shorter extension to the COE.

If deferments or suspensions are for a long period of time, typically more than 6 months, in some student cases a student may be asked to leave Australia for the duration of their deferment and only return to Australia when they are to resume their studies.

As each student's situation will be different, it is recommended Students directly contact the [Department of Home Affairs](#) website or helpline (131 881) for information, and the local the Australian immigration department office for advice, on how the potential deferment period can affect their stay in Australia.

In the case of a deferment, suspension or cancellation there are three (3) different outcomes on the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE):

1. It does NOT affect end date COE - ALG notifies the Australian immigration department through PRISMS that it is deferring or suspending a student's enrolment for a period without affecting the end date of the CoE.
2. It does affect end date COE - ALG notifies the Australian immigration department through PRISMS that it is deferring or suspending a student's enrolment for a period which will affect the end date of the CoE. In such situations, PRISMS will cancel the original CoE, and immediately offer the provider the opportunity to create a new CoE with a revised re-commencement and end date. If the provider does not know when the student will return, it can choose not to create a new CoE at that point, but to wait until the student has notified the provider of the intended date of return before creating the new CoE.
3. Permanent cancellation - The provider notifies the Australian immigration department through PRISMS that it wishes to permanently cancel (terminate) the student's enrolment.

Record Keeping for Deferral, Suspension or Cancellation

ALG keeps documentary evidence on the student's file of the assessment of the student's application for deferral or suspension. Similarly, when ALG suspends a student's enrolment due to misbehaviour, documentary evidence of this decision should be kept on the student's file.

Extensions and Cancellations

The extension period granted will vary from module to module and subject to availability, i.e. course being superseded. Extensions fees may apply and will be confirmed at the time of request by the student.

Students who wish to cancel their enrolment with ALG need to complete an online Course Cancellation form available at alg.edu.au/cancel/.

Any cancellation from a course or package of courses will incur a cancellation fee. The cancellation fee must be paid at the time of submitting the Course Cancellation form. Refer to the Additional Fee Schedule. This fee doesn't apply to students changing courses within ALG. The processing of any course cancellation is subject to approval.

If a student's cancellation is approved, ALG will automatically determine the student's eligibility for a refund of tuition fees. If a student is assessed as being eligible to receive a refund of tuition fees, ALG will contact the student and process the refund accordingly. For more details about refund eligibility, refer to [Part A Section 3 of Student Handbook](#).

As a condition of cancellation, students must ensure all outstanding fees are paid. Outstanding fees may include tuition fees and/or additional fees owing.

Students who cancel and who pay tuition fees by a payment plan or pay-by-month program should note that course cancellation processing will take 10 working days from the submission of the Course Cancellation Form, provided that all relevant documentation has been received from the student and the cancellation is approved. Any payment instalments scheduled in the course cancellation processing period will be processed as scheduled. If a student's cancellation is rejected, ALG will refund the cancellation fee paid at the time of submitting the Course Cancellation Form within 10 working days from the rejected outcome.