

International Student Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy

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| Purpose: | The policy is designed to ensure international students and staff understand their responsibilities for deferment, suspension and cancellation of studies. | |
| Scope: | This policy applies to all international students who are studying a course at Stuartholme School and Stuartholme School staff. | |
| Status: | Draft | Supersedes: All previous Policies. |
| Authorised by: | Principal | Date of Authorisation: |
| References: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018 National Code | |
| Review Date: | Every three years | Next Review Date: November 2021 |
| Policy Owner: | Principal | |

UNDER REVIEW

1. Background

The International Student Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy is designed to ensure international students and staff follow the requirements for deferment, suspension and cancellation under the 2018 National Code. It is the policy of Stuartholme School to live out the values that reflect its Sacred Heart tradition. These values are embodied in the Goals of Sacred Heart Education and we educate to:

1. A personal and active faith in God;
2. A deep respect for intellectual values;
3. The building of community as a Christian value;
4. A social awareness that impels to action;
5. Personal growth in an atmosphere of wise freedom.

2. Policy Statement

This policy outlines to international students and staff the requirements for deferment, suspension and cancellation in line with the 2018 National Code.

3. Policy

1. Communicating with families about changes in enrolment status

- a) All communications regarding changes to enrolment status will be made directly with students and parents, in accordance with the latest contact details provided to the school.
- b) Parents must therefore keep *Stuartholme School* informed of their current contact details, as per the conditions of the student visa.
- c) Where relevant and where approved by the parents, the school may also share copies of correspondence with the child's education agent to help facilitate communication about any changes in enrolment status. However, the parents with whom the school has a formal written agreement are the primary contact for the school in such matters. The school will not act on any decision affecting the student's enrolment that is not made by the parents.

STUDENT-INITIATED CHANGES IN ENROLMENT

2. Deferment of commencement of study requested by student

- a) *Stuartholme School* will only grant a deferment of commencement of studies for compassionate and compelling circumstances. These include but are not limited to:
 - i) illness, where a medical certificate states that the student will be unable to attend classes
 - ii) bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible a death certificate should be provided)
 - iii) major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country that has impacted on expected commencement of studies
 - iv) a traumatic experience which has impacted on the student (where possible, these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports).

International Student Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy



- v) after undertaking ELICOS studies, the student has not/will not meet the English language benchmark required for entry into the desired course, and the school is willing to defer the student's commencement in the course until a later date when the required benchmark is achieved.
- b) All applications for deferment will be considered within 5 working days.
- c) The final decision for assessing and granting a deferment of commencement of studies lies with the *Principal*. Where a student's request to defer her commencement of studies is refused, the student has a right of appeal (see *Stuartholme School's* Complaints and Appeals policy).
- d) Deferment will be recorded on PRISMS within 14 days of being granted.

3. Suspension of study requested by student

- a) Once the student has commenced the course, *Stuartholme School* will only grant a suspension of study for compassionate and compelling circumstances. These include but are not limited to:
 - i. illness, 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)
 - ii. major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel that has/will impact on studies
 - iii. a traumatic experience which has impacted on the student (where possible, these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports).
 - iv. Student return to their home country to sit a university exam (or similar assessment) which impacts upon their education
- b) Where there is a significant issue impacting upon a student's attendance or course progress, it is essential that the student or parents contact the school as soon as possible to discuss the concern so that appropriate support can be put in place. Where deemed necessary, this may involve temporarily suspending the student's enrolment so that matters can be resolved without having a negative impact on the student's ability to satisfy their visa conditions.
- c) Temporary suspensions of study cannot exceed 6 months duration.
- d) Suspensions will be recorded on PRISMS within 14 days of being granted if the student is under 18 years of age, and within 31 days if the student is over 18 years of age.
- e) The period of suspension will not be included in attendance calculations.
- f) Applications will be assessed on merit by the *Principal*
- g) Some examples of circumstances that are not considered compassionate and compelling at *Stuartholme School* include:
 - i. Requests for early departure or late return from vacation, including inability to secure cheap flights
 - ii. Leaving early or returning late from holidays in order to attend festivals in the student's home country
 - iii. Returning home to attend family gatherings that occur during term time.
- h) As part of any assessment of a request to defer or temporarily suspend studies, the impact of the request on the student's ability to complete their intended course of study in accordance

International Student Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy



with their CoE/s and student visa will be considered. Any implications will be communicated to students.

- i) All applications for suspension will be considered within 5 working days.
- j) The final decision for assessing and granting a suspension of studies lies with the *Principal*. Where a student's request to suspend studies is refused, the student has a right of appeal (see *Stuartholme School's* Complaints and Appeals policy).

4. Student-initiated cancellation of enrolment

- a) All notification of withdrawal from a course, or applications for refunds, must be made in writing and submitted to the Principal. Please see *Stuartholme School's* Refund Policy for information regarding refunds and cancellation fees.
- b) A student will be deemed to have inactively notified *Stuartholme School* of cancellation of enrolment where:
 - i. the student has not yet finished her course/s of study with the school, and
 - ii. does not resume studies at the school within [14 days] after a holiday break, and
 - iii. the student has not previously provided the school with written notification of withdrawal.
- c) Student-initiated cancellation of enrolment, including "inactive" cancellation of enrolment in 4.b), above, is not subject to *Stuartholme School's* Complaints and Appeals Policy.

SCHOOL-INITIATED CHANGES IN ENROLMENT

5. School-initiated exclusion from class

- a) *Stuartholme School* may exclude a student from class studies on the grounds of misbehaviour by the student. Exclusion will occur as the result of any behaviour identified as resulting in exclusion in *Stuartholme School's* Peer Relations Policy.
- b) Students may also be excluded from class for failure to pay fees that she was required to pay in order to undertake or continue the course, as stated in the written agreement.
- c) Where *Stuartholme School* intends to exclude a student from class it will first issue a letter which notifies the student and parents of this intention. The letter will provide details of the reason/s for the intended exclusion, as well as information about how to access *Stuartholme School's* internal appeals process. Further information about the appeals process in the event of a school-initiated exclusion from class is outlined below.
- d) Excluded students must abide by the conditions of their exclusion from studies and must adhere to any welfare and accommodation arrangements in place, as determined by the *Principal*.
- e) Where the student is provided with homework or other studies for the period of the exclusion, the student must continue to meet the academic requirements of the course.
- f) Exclusions from class will not be included in attendance calculations for the study period and will not be recorded on PRISMS.

International Student Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy



6. School-initiated suspension of studies

- a) *Stuartholme School* may initiate a suspension of studies for a student on the grounds of misbehaviour by the student. Suspension will occur as the result of any behaviour identified as resulting in suspension in *Stuartholme School's* Peer Relations Policy.
- b) Students may also be suspended for failure to pay fees that she was required to pay in order to undertake or continue the course, as stated in the student's written agreement.
- c) Where *Stuartholme School* intends to suspend the enrolment of a student, it will first issue a letter that notifies the student and parents of this intention. The letter will provide details of the reason/s for the intended suspension, as well as information about how to access *Stuartholme School's* internal appeals process. Further information about the appeals process in the event of a school-initiated suspension is outlined below.
- d) Suspended students must abide by the conditions of their suspension from studies and must adhere to any welfare and accommodation arrangements in place, as determined by the *Principal*.
- e) Students who have been suspended for more than 28 days may need to contact Department of Immigration. (Please see contact details at: <http://www.border.gov.au/about/contact/offices-locations> .)
- f) Suspensions will be recorded on PRISMS.
- g) The period of suspension will not be included in attendance calculations.

7. School-initiated cancellation of enrolment

- a) *Stuartholme School* will cancel the enrolment of a student under the following conditions:
 - i) Any breach of an agreed condition of enrolment as outlined in the student's written agreement, including failure to disclose a pre-existing condition requiring a high degree of specialised support or care
 - ii) Failure to pay course fees
 - iii) Failure to maintain approved welfare and accommodation arrangements (visa condition 8532) [Alternatively schools may decide that they will not cancel enrolment for this reason]
 - iv) Any behaviour identified as resulting in cancellation in *Stuartholme School's* Peer Relations Policy.
- b) Where *Stuartholme School* intends to cancel the enrolment of a student it will first issue a letter which notifies the student and parents of this intention. The letter will also provide details of the reason/s for the intended cancellation, as well as information about how to access *Stuartholme School's* internal appeals process. Further information about the appeals process in the event of a school-initiated cancellation is outlined below.
- c) *Stuartholme School* is required to report any confirmed breach of course progress and attendance requirements to the Department of Immigration. Where a student is reported for breach of visa condition, her enrolment at *Stuartholme School* will be cancelled and this may impact on the student's visa. Further information can be found in *Stuartholme School's*

International Student Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy



Course Progress and Attendance Policy.

- d) For the duration of the internal appeals process, *Stuartholme School* will maintain the student's enrolment and the student will attend classes as normal. The *Principal* will determine if participation in studies will be in class or under a supervised arrangement outside of classes.
- e) If a student decides to access *Stuartholme School's* complaints and appeals process because they have been notified of a school initiated suspension or cancellation of enrolment under Standard 9, the change in enrolment status will not be reported in PRISMS until the internal complaints and appeals process is finalised, unless extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student apply (see Definitions below).
- f) Where extenuating circumstances are deemed to exist, a student may still access the complaints and appeals process, but *Stuartholme School* need not await the outcome of this process before changing the student's enrolment status in PRISMS. If the school has issued a CAAW for such a student, welfare provisions under Standard 5.6 are applicable.
- g) The use of extenuating circumstances by *Stuartholme School* to suspend or cancel a student's enrolment prior to the completion of any complaints and appeals process will be supported by appropriate evidence.
- h) The final decision for evaluating extenuating circumstances lies with the *Principal*.

8. Student to seek information from Department of Immigration

- a) Deferment, suspension and cancellation of enrolment can have an effect on a student's visa as a result of changes to enrolment status. Students can visit the Department of Immigration Website <http://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Stud> for further information about their visa conditions and obligations.

9. Definitions

- a) Day – any day including weekends and public holidays in or out of term time
- b) Extenuating circumstances - if the student's health or wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, is likely to be at risk.

Examples include:

- the student refuses to maintain approved welfare and accommodation arrangements (for students under 18 years of age)
- the student is missing
- the student has medical concerns or severe depression or psychological issues which lead the school to fear for the student's wellbeing
- the student has engaged or threatened to engage in behaviour that is reasonably believed to endanger the student or others
- is at risk of committing a criminal offence, or
- the student is the subject of investigation relating to criminal matters.