

Higher Education Deferral or Leave from Studies Procedure

Policy Code: SS1968

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Purpose

This procedure supports and mandates the implementation of Federation University Australia's [Student Access, Progression and Wellbeing Policy](#). It expands on the principles outlined in the policy and provides guidance on processing and granting of:

- deferment prior to commencement of studies; or
- Leave of absence after commencement.

Students with a pre-existing disability/health condition or prolonged adverse circumstances may be eligible for assistance and support – refer Disability Learning Access Plan Procedure.

Scope

This procedure applies to all domestic students of Federation University Australia studying higher education programs, regardless of the training delivery mode (on-campus, off-campus, online), including those offered through partner providers. However it **does not** apply to applications lodged by international students which will be assessed according to the University's Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation of a Student's Enrolment (ESOS Specific) Procedure.

All commencing students who have been given a formal written offer for a higher education award program by the University but have not yet enrolled will have the option to defer this offer for one teaching period (6 months) to a maximum of two teaching periods (12 months) unless approved otherwise by the relevant School Board. Students who enrol in the University may apply to take leave from studies at any time.

Students intending to transfer into another Federation University Australia program should be directed to complete the Internal Program Transfer form (not the Amend you program status form).

Legislative Context

- Federation University Australia Act 2010
- Statute 2.2 Academic Board
- Statute 5.1 Academic Awards and Courses
- Statute 5.2 Entry Quotas, Admissions and Enrolment
- Statute 5.3 Assessment
- Statute 5.4 Exclusion for Reasons of Unfitness
- Statute 5.6 Admission to Academic Awards
- Disability Discrimination Act (1992)
- Disability Standards for Education (2005)
- Privacy Act (1988)
- Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Educational Services to Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (as amended), Educational Services to Overseas Students (ESOS) Regulations 2001 and National Code of Practice 2007
- Standard 13 – Deferring, Suspending or Cancelling the Student's Enrolment

Definitions

A complete list of definitions relevant to this procedure is contained within the [Student Access, Progression and Wellbeing Policy](#).

A further list of definitions **specifically** relevant to this procedure is included below:

Term	Definition
CUP	Centre for University Partnerships
Deferment	A period before a student who has been offered a place in a higher education program, commences in that program, normally covering up to 12 months, unless approved otherwise by the relevant School Board.
Enrolment	The process by which a person who is in receipt of a written offer of a place, enrolls in their courses
ESOS Act	Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000, as amended from time to time
Internal transfer	A student enrolled in a Federation University Australia program who wishes to transfer to another program within the University
Offer	Notification to a student in writing that they have a place in a program or course

Actions (applicable to Domestic Students only)

1. Confidentiality and Privacy

Any Deferral, Leave from Studies or Withdrawal from All Studies Applications received must be treated by all parties as strictly confidential – refer [Information Privacy Policy](#).

Information forming part of the application shall only be discussed with, or made available to, a person who is:

- A party to the application
- Is or has been legitimately involved in the management of that application; or
- Has a formal management role in following up the consequences or implications of the application

Parties must be aware of the consequences if there is a breach of confidentiality, which may include disciplinary action.

2. Applying for and approving Deferment

	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	STEPS
A.	Requesting a deferral	Student	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On receipt of a written offer of a place in a higher education program, the student has two weeks to select the 'defer' option in their MySC account. 2. The student may discuss circumstances for deferral with Student HQ 3.
B.	Reviewing/ approving the Application	Student HQ	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve or deny student's deferral request (deferrals in excess of one year require authorisation from the School Board) 2. Update student MySC file 3. Notify student in writing of approval/non-approval

3. Applying for and Granting Leave from Studies

	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	STEPS
A.	Completing the Amend your program status (Request for Leave from Studies) form	Student	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Once enrolled, complete and lodge an Amend your program status Form, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student name and ID number • Program from which Leave of Absence is being sought • The period of time for which the leave is sought (one semester or up to one year) • The reason/s for which the leave is being sought

	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	STEPS
			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Keep a copy of the original document in a secure place for the duration of the requested leave 3. Electronically submit to Student HQ: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the completed form • relevant documentary evidence to support the application where required 4. Continue to attend classes while awaiting the decision on the application
B.	Granting Leave of Absence	Student HQ	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receipt the application in the University's approved student management system 2. Automatically grant a first application from a student for leave of absence providing the reasons are appropriate 3. Notify the student of the outcome: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • within 10 University working days from date of decision • clearly state the program/course from which Leave from studies has been granted; and • the period for which it has been awarded 4. Scrutinise more closely, a second application and accept only on grounds such as physical or mental ill health, financial hardship, or clear loss of motivation 5. Advise students granted second periods of leave that third applications may not succeed unless the grounds for leave are serious and unavoidable 6. Applications for leave from studies from students whose performance warrants appearance before an academic progress committee will only be considered after

	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	STEPS
			the decision of the progress committee has been reached
C.	Withdrawal	Student	1. The student has the right to withdraw their application up to the point that the decision has been made and will need to make their intent known to Student HQ
D.	Considering retrospective applications	Student HQ	1. Amend your Program Status applications for Leave from studies will not be approved retrospectively other than in exceptional circumstances – refer Higher Education Special Consideration Procedure

Supporting Documents

- [Student Access, Progression and Wellbeing Policy](#)
- [Higher Education Special Consideration Procedure](#) and associated forms
- [Disability Learning Access Plan \(LAP\) Procedure](#) and associated plan

Responsibility

- Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Student Support and Services is responsible for monitoring the implementation, outcomes and scheduled review of this policy and its accompanying procedure
- Director, Student Connect is responsible for maintaining the content of this policy as delegated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Student Support
- Manager, Health and Wellbeing is responsible for the administration support for the maintenance of this policy as directed by the Director, Student Connect

Promulgation

The [Higher Education Deferral or Leave from Studies Procedure](#) will be communicated throughout the University community in the form of:

- An Announcement Notice via FedNews website and on the 'Recently Approved Documents' page on the 'Policies, Procedures and Forms @ the University' website to alert the University-wide community of the approved Policy.
- Learning and Teaching Committee
- School meetings
- Academic Induction Program
- Student Health & Wellbeing meetings
- Student Senate meetings

Implementation

The [Higher Education Deferral or Leave from Studies Procedure](#) will be communicated throughout the University community in the form of:

- An Announcement Notice via FedNews website and on the 'Recently Approved Documents' page on the 'Policies, Procedures and Forms @ the University' website to alert the University-wide community of the approved Policy
- Moodle module

Records Management

Document Title	Location	Responsible Officer	Minimum Retention Period
Application for Deferment Form	The University's approved student management system	Program Coordinator	Destroy 7 years following deferment
Student's documentary evidence	The University's approved student management system	Program Coordinator	Destroy 7 years following deferment
Notification of Deferment approval/non-approval	The University's approved student management system	Program Coordinator	Destroy 7 years following deferment
Amend your Program Status Leave from Studies	The University's approved student management system	Program Coordinator	Destroy 7 years following leave of absence
Notification documentation	The University's approved student management system	Program Coordinator	Destroy 7 years following leave of absence