



SYDNEY FILM SCHOOL

Name	Assessing, Approving and Recording a Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation of Study		
What is the purpose of this policy?	To outline Sydney Film School's (SFS) process when a student requests to defer their course, or a student is suspended or has their enrolment cancelled. It provides a procedure for assessing, approving and recording such deferrals, suspensions or cancellations of study.		
Version	#5	Next review	February 2019
What law applies?	The National Code (ESOS) 2018: Standard 9. Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2012: Section 19.		
Who is affected by this policy?	Who has rights?	Who has responsibilities?	
	Students	Head of Film (Owner) Student Services Manager & Registrar	

Definitions

Student Initiated Cancellation – occurs when a student ceases or cancels their enrolment in a course.

SFS Initiated Cancellation – occurs when the SFS cancels an enrolment in a course.

Student Initiated Suspension – occurs when a student temporarily postpones their enrolment.

SFS Initiated Suspension – occurs when the SFS suspends an enrolment in a course.

Student Initiated Deferral – occurs when an applicant or student enrolled in the course postpones the commencement date of the course.

SFS Initiated Deferral - occurs when the SFS defers a student's enrolment.

Policy

SFS encourages its students to complete their course within their enrolment timeframe as shown on their Student Agreement.

SFS recognises that compassionate or compelling circumstances may arise during their studies that may lead a student to request to defer, suspend or cancel part of or their entire course.

Under the requirements of the ESOS Act and National Code if an International Student has enrolled in a

course with SFS, they are not permitted to defer commencement of their studies, or suspend their studies, except on the grounds of illness evidenced by a doctor's certificate, or other exceptional compassionate circumstances beyond the control of the student. If a student defers or suspends their studies on any other grounds, SFS must report the student to Department of Education and Training (DET) via PRISMS, as not complying with their visa conditions.

If a student is found to have engaged in misconduct, refer to SFS' *Student Charter*, SFS may suspend or cancel the student's studies. A student may also withdraw from a course and thereby cancel their study for their own reasons.

SFS-initiated deferral/suspension/cancellation of enrolment

SFS may defer commencement of a course when a course is not offered.

SFS may suspend or cancel a student's enrolment on the grounds of:

- a) misbehaviour by the student;
- b) unsatisfactory course progress, refer to SFS' *Recording and Monitoring Course Progress Policy and Procedure*;
- c) the non-payment of course fees in accordance with the Student Agreement and Payment Schedule;
- d) where the student is considered a threat to the well-being of staff and students.

Student-initiated deferral or suspension of enrolment

Students may, through formal procedures with SFS, be granted permission to defer the commencement date of the course they are enrolled¹ in; or if they have already commenced their course, to temporarily suspend their studies if they are unable to attend or commit to the course for a specified period of time.

This may only occur on the grounds of compassionate or compelling circumstances, which includes the unavailability of a course and student visa delay (refer to SFS' *Compassionate or Compelling Circumstances Policy and Procedure*).

SFS will inform International students that deferment or suspension of enrolment may affect their student visa.

Student-initiated cancellation of enrolment

Students who wish to cancel their studies may do so at any time. If the student withdraws from the course prior to the Census date, they will not incur a debt for that Unit of Study; however if they withdraw after the Census date, they will incur the full debt for that Unit of Study. Students may apply for a refund of fees as per SFS' *Refunds Policy and Procedure*.

For International students who have not yet completed the first 6 months of their course and are moving to another registered provider, they will need to make a formal request to transfer to another institution as per SFS' *Assessing Overseas Student Transfer Requests Policy and Procedure*.

Procedure

SFS-initiated deferral/suspension/cancellation of enrolment

- a) Where a situation arises in which SFS has grounds to suspend or cancel a student's enrolment, the

¹ Enrolled – for Local students this means that the student has signed the student agreement and for International students this means having a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) with the status of 'Visa Granted' or 'Studying'.

Student Services Manager & Registrar will meet with the Head of Film and relevant staff member to assess the situation.

- b) If the outcome of the meeting is to suspend or cancel the student's enrolment, the Student Services Manager & Registrar, will write to the student informing them of SFS' intention to suspend or cancel their enrolment, the reasons behind the decision and for International students, to tell them to seek advice from the Department of Home Affairs on the potential impact on their visa, and of the intention to notify the Department of Education and Training via PRISMS of the change in the student's enrolment status.
- c) The student will also be advised that they have 20 working days to appeal the decision in accordance with SFS' *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*, unless their health or wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others is at risk.
- d) A copy of the letter and supporting evidence along with the documented decision will be placed on the student's file.
- e) If the student chooses not to challenge the suspension or cancellation of their enrolment, or has unsuccessfully exhausted all internal appeal processes, the suspension of study or cancellation of enrolment will be formally processed. In the case of International students, the Student Services Manager & Registrar will notify the Department of Education and Training via PRISMS of the change in the student's enrolment.
- f) The Student Services Manager & Registrar will inform Accounts, and the Course Coordinator of the student's deferral or suspension.

Student Appeal

If the student chooses to access SFS's *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*, SFS will maintain the student's enrolment until the internal grievance process is completed and will not notify DET via PRISMS of any change to the student's enrolment status, except in extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student.

Extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student may include, but are not limited to, the student:

- being missing;
- having medical concerns, severe depression or psychological issues which lead SFS to fear for the student's wellbeing;
- having engaged or threatening to engage in behaviour that is reasonably believed to endanger the student or others; or
- being at risk of committing a criminal offence.

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

The National Code does not require SFS to continue providing learning opportunities through the 20 working days allowed to appeal the decision and during the internal grievance process. Based on the nature of the misconduct, SFS will decide, on a case by case basis, whether to allow the student to continue to attend class, or make alternative study arrangements for the student, or to deny the student access to study opportunities. In making such a decision SFS will consider whether denying the student learning opportunities throughout the 20 day appeal period and during the internal grievance process may disadvantage the student in their subsequent studies should the grievance process find in their favour.

Student-initiated deferral or suspension of enrolment

- a) Students may request a deferral of the commencement of their course or suspension of their studies by notifying the Student Services Manager & Registrar of their intention in writing. International students who have already been granted a visa will need to provide evidence demonstrating compassionate or compelling circumstances.
- b) If such evidence is required, the Student Services Manager & Registrar will seek approval from the

Head of Film that compassionate or compelling circumstances apply.

- c) If the applicant's request for a deferral or suspension is successful, the Student Services Manager & Registrar will advise the applicant via email and issue the applicant with a new CoE if required.
- d) If the request is not successful (i.e. their situation does not meet the criteria for compassionate or compelling circumstances) the Student Services Manager & Registrar will inform the applicant of the decision and notify them that they have 20 working days to appeal the decision through SFS' *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.
- e) The request for deferment and any accompanying evidence will be placed on the student's file.
- f) The Student Services Manager & Registrar will inform Accounts, and the Course Coordinator of the student's deferral or suspension.

Student-initiated cancellation of enrolment

- a) Students may request to cancel their studies by completing a Withdrawal form and submitting to the Student Services Manager & Registrar.
- b) In the instance where an International student who has not yet completed the first 6 months of their course wishes to transfer to another provider they will also need to submit a Request to Transfer Between Registered Providers form, refer to SFS' *Assessing Overseas Student Transfer Requests Policy and Procedure*.
- c) The Student Services Manager & Registrar will process the student's request and inform the student of the outcome, and if relevant issue a Letter of Release. For International students, the Student Services Manager & Registrar will also cancel the student's CoE via PRISMS.
- d) The request for cancellation and any accompanying evidence will be placed on the student's file.
- e) The Student Services Manager & Registrar will inform Accounts, and the Course Coordinator of the student's cancellation.

Version Control

Approved by	Version #	Date
Management Committee	1	9 July 2009
Management Committee	2	11 April 2011
Policy and Procedure Committee	3	11 March 2015
Policy and Procedure Committee	4	10 May 2016
Course Improvement Committee	5	18 July 2018