

Withdrawal Policy and Procedure

Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the process for all students wanting to withdraw from a College course or unit of study. The policy also provides for the administration of applications for withdrawal.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to FEE-HELP and non FEE-HELP students enrolled in ELICOS, Vocational Training and Higher Education courses at Think: Colleges Pty Ltd and/or APM Training Institute Pty Ltd ("the College").

Definitions

Refer to *Glossary of Terms*.

Policy Content

Domestic Students enrolled in a higher education course or a VET FEE-HELP enabled course

A student seeking to withdraw from a course/unit must complete the *Change/Defer/Withdraw form* available from Think: Student Services and return the completed form to Think: Student Services. The student must also meet with the relevant Head of College (or delegated nominee).

The College policy is to assess all withdraw requests based on particular factors that need to be taken into consideration. These are that the student requesting a transfer has an accurate understanding of what the transfer represents to their study options, or that they still owe College course fees or that it is suspected that they are seeking transfer only due to failure to meet academic progress or attendance. The Head of College (or delegated nominee) will make any final decision as to whether to refuse a letter of release or withdrawal from a course of study for any student. Letters of release are provided to students at no cost to the student.

Overseas students enrolled in all courses and domestic students enrolled in a vocational course which is not VET FEE-HELP enabled

A student seeking to withdraw from a course/unit must complete the *Change/Defer/Withdraw form* available from Think: Student Services and return the completed form to Think: Student Services. The student must also meet with the relevant Head of College (or delegated nominee). Under the National Code 2007, an overseas student who wishes to withdraw from their course of study and transfer to another education provider must complete at least six months of his/her principal course of study with the College.

Overseas students wishing to withdraw before completing at least 6 months of their principal course in order to transfer to another institution may be granted a letter of release if:

- The student's fees are fully paid and
- The student had planned to articulate to another course with the College and has not met the required entry requirements for the principal course or a pre-requisite course.

A letter of release may also be granted under Exceptional Circumstances as determined by the Head of College (or delegated nominee).

Exceptional circumstances refers to circumstances beyond the control of the student, such as

- serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes; or
- the College is unable to offer a pre-requisite unit of study (National Code 2007, Standard 13.2); or
- the College implementing its intervention strategy for students who were at risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress; or
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (appropriate evidence must 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:

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APM Training Institute CRICOS Provider No 01897A

- 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)
- inability to begin due to a delay in receiving a student visa.

The Head of College (or delegated nominee) may consider additional special circumstances on a case by case basis to include factors related to academic progression, course suitability, student welfare, or future education/career opportunities.

A letter of release will not be granted if the student:

- Has outstanding course fees; or
- Is receiving assistance through the *Academic Progression Policy and Procedure*; or
- Has not completed a minimum of 6 months of their first course with the College where the first course is longer than 6 months; or
- Provides insufficient evidence of special/exceptional circumstances; or
- Decides they are no longer interested in the course of study; or
- Is avoiding being reported to DIAC for breach of a student visa related condition; or
- Receives errors of career and/or course advice by an Education Agent; or
- Has work related issues impacting on the students ability to attend class; or
- Is living a significant distance away from campus, and having travel difficulties
- Has other factors that may be considered to the student's detriment. These include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - if the transfer may jeopardise the student's progression through a package of courses;
 - if, in the opinion of the Head of College (or delegated nominee), the proposed transfer is not in the best interests of the students future study and/ or career plans;
 - the student has shown no evidence of meeting and consulting with the Student Welfare Manager and/or Program Director to address any personal or study related issues.

The Head of College (or delegated nominee) may consider and reject additional special circumstances on a case by case basis to include factors related to academic progression, course suitability, student welfare, or future education/career opportunities.

If a letter of release is granted, a copy of the letter will be sent to the student's receiving provider. The letter will include information on whether or not the student:

- has demonstrated a commitment to their studies during the course,
- has a good attendance record, and
- has paid all relevant fees for the course. (QLD, Education (Overseas Students) Regulations 1998, Section 10)

The College policy is to assess all withdraw requests based on particular factors that need to be taken into consideration. These are that the student requesting a transfer has an accurate understanding of what the transfer represents to their study options, or that they still owe College course fees or that it is suspected that they are seeking transfer only to avoid being reported to DEEWR for failure to meet academic progress or attendance. The Head of College (or delegated nominee) will make any final decision as to whether to refuse a letter of release or withdrawal from a course of study for any student. Letters of release are provided to students at no cost to the student.

Procedure for implementation

Domestic Students enrolled in a higher education course or a VET FEE-HELP enabled course

FEE-HELP Students Withdrawal Process

The procedure below will be used for students who withdraw before the census date or who withdraw after the census date and who are using FEE-HELP.

1. Students seeking a withdrawal from a course or unit of study must complete the *Change/Defer/Withdraw form* available from Think: Student Services and return the completed form to Think: Student Services. All applications must have relevant written or supporting documents.
2. Students must meet with the relevant Head of College (or delegated nominee).
3. Once a decision has been made, Think: Student Services will notify the student in writing of the outcome.
4. Any refunds or re-crediting of FEE-HELP Balances will be processed according to the *Refund Policy and Procedure* and the *Student Review Policy and Procedure for Re-Crediting a FEE-HELP Balance*.
5. If a student withdrawal application is rejected then the student will have an option to appeal the decision within 20 working days after receiving the notification. (Refer to appeal section under the *Non Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure*)

Non FEE-HELP Students Withdrawal Process

The procedure below will be used for students who withdraw after the census date and who are not using FEE-HELP.

1. If a student no longer wishes to continue in their course they must formally withdraw. This includes where the student:
 - a. accepts an offer from another institution;
 - b. for any other reason, decides to discontinue their course.
2. Students seeking a withdrawal must complete the *Change/Defer/Withdraw form* available from Think: Student Services and return the completed form to Think: Student Services. All applications must have relevant written or supporting documents such as Letter of Offer from another provider.
 - If the student is under 18, their parent or guardian must support this request in writing.
 - If the student is under 18, they must also provide written evidence that the new provider will accept responsibility for their accommodation and welfare.
3. Think: Student Services will enter the application details into Hermes and forward the application to the relevant Head of College (or delegated nominee).
4. The Head of College (or delegated nominee) will review and approve or reject the student's application. Each application will be treated on its merits, as withdrawal is not automatic. After a decision has been made, the outcome is recorded in Hermes and processed by Think: Student Services.
5. The student will be advised in writing of the outcome by Think: Student Services within 15 working days.
6. Fees shall be refunded in accordance with the *Refund Policy and Procedure*
7. If a student withdrawal application is rejected then the student will have an option to appeal the decision within 20 working days after receiving the notification. (Refer to appeal section under the *Non Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure*)

Overseas students enrolled in all courses and domestic students enrolled in a vocational course which is not VET FEE-HELP enabled

1. If a student no longer wishes to continue in their course they must formally withdraw. This includes where the student:
 - a. Accepts an offer from another institution;
 - b. Accepts another offer from a Think: Education Group College (Refer to *Course Transfer Policy and Procedure*); or
 - c. For any other reason, decides to discontinue their course.
2. Students seeking a withdrawal must complete the *Change/Defer/Withdraw form* available from Think: Student Services and return the completed form to Think: Student Services. All applications must have relevant written or supporting documents.
 - If an overseas student is transferring to another institution in Australia, they must provide Think: Student Services with a valid letter of offer from the institution
 - If the student is under 18, their parent or guardian must support this request in writing.

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- If the student is an overseas student under 18 and is not being cared for by a parent or suitable nominated relative, they must also provide written evidence that the new provider will accept responsibility for approving their accommodation and welfare arrangements. (National Code 2007, Standard 7.3)
3. Think: Student Services will enter the application details into Hermes and forward the application to the relevant Head of College (or delegated nominee).
 4. The Head of College (or delegated nominee) will review and approve or reject the student's application. Each application will be treated on its merits, as withdrawal is not automatic. After a decision has been made, the outcome is recorded in Hermes and processed by Think: Student Services.
 5. The student will be advised in writing of the outcome by Think: Student Services within 15 working days with one of the following:
 - If the withdrawal is approved for a domestic student enrolled in a vocational course which is not VET FEE-HELP enabled, the student will be issued a letter approving the withdrawal
 - If the withdrawal is approved for an overseas student who has completed at least 6 months of their principal course, the student will be issued a letter approving the withdrawal. The letter must direct the student to contact DIAC and students transferring to another institution in Australia must be directed to seek advice from DIAC on whether a new student visa is required (National Code 2007, Standard 7.4) and the Student Services Officer will report the student to DIAC and DEEWR via PRISMS within 14 days. For overseas students under 18 years old where the College has taken responsibility for approving the student's accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements, Think: Student Services will advise DIAC as soon as possible that it no longer approves these arrangements, see *Overseas Students Under 18 Policy and Procedure*.
 - If the withdrawal is approved for an overseas student who has not completed at least 6 months of their principal course, the student will be issued a letter approving the withdrawal including release from the College. If a letter of release is granted, a copy of the letter will be sent to the student's receiving provider. The letter will include information on whether or not the student:
 - has demonstrated a commitment to their studies during the course,
 - has a good attendance record, and
 - has paid all relevant fees for the course. (QLD, Education (Overseas Students) Regulations 1998, Section 10)
 The letter must direct the student to contact DIAC and students transferring to another institution in Australia must be directed to seek advice from DIAC on whether a new student visa is required (National Code 2007, Standard 7.4) and the Student Services Officer will report the student to DIAC and DEEWR via PRISMS within 14 days. For overseas students under 18 years old where the College has taken responsibility for approving the student's accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements, Think: Student Services will advise DIAC as soon as possible that it no longer approves these arrangements, see *Overseas Students Under 18 Policy and Procedure*.
 - If the withdrawal is rejected, the reasons for the decision will be included in the letter
 6. Fees shall be refunded in accordance with the *Refund Policy and Procedure*
 7. If a student withdrawal application is rejected then the student will have an option to appeal the decision within 20 working days after receiving the notification. (Refer to appeal section under the *Non Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure*)

Publication

These procedures are to be published for students on the Think: Colleges website and in the Student Handbook to ensure current and prospective students have up to date and accurate information publicly available to them.

Responsibility	Student Services Manager and Head of College
Record Management	Withdrawal and Deferral Form Letter of Release Student File HERMES
Reference	Academic Progression Policy and Procedure Student Review Policy and Procedure for Re-Crediting a FEE-HELP Balance Refund Policy and Procedure Non Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure Course Transfer Policy and Procedure Overseas Students Under 18 Policy and Procedure Glossary of Terms
Policy Developed By	Compliance Manager
Policy Endorsed By	Academic Board
Policy Approved By	CEO
Policy Complies with	AUQA, ESOS Act 2000, National Code 2007 and AQTF 2007
Version Number	3.0
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