

# Leave of Absence Policy

## Fact box

- **Policy owner:** Registrar
- **Policy category:** Academic: Academic Administration
- **Policy status:** Approved
- **Approval body:** Academic Board
- **Endorsement body:** Quality Assurance Committee
- **Related policies:**
  - [Enrolment Policy](#)
  - [Higher Degree Research Candidature Policy](#)
  - [International Student Policy](#)
  - [Student Complaint, Grievance Resolution, and Appeals Policy](#)
- **Last amended:** 22nd April 2025
- **Relevant HESF:** 1.1, 2.4, 7.2 / Relevant RTO Standards 2015: 5.2, 6.2-6.5 / National Code : Standard 7.2.2.2, 8.15.1, 8.16.1, 9.2. Factsheets – National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018

## Purpose

This policy sets out the principles and procedures for managing leave of absence from an Alphacrucis University College (AC) course of study.

## Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled in HE and VET courses at AC. In addition, international students must meet regulatory requirements that may not be specified in this policy.

## Policy

### DEFINITIONS

Compassionate and compelling circumstances refer to situations where a student experiences serious, unforeseen events that significantly impact their ability to meet academic or visa requirements.

Compassionate and compelling circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the student and which have an impact on the student's course progress or wellbeing.

These circumstances may include but are not limited to:

Serious illness or injury to the student or a close family member, supported by medical certificates

- Bereavement of close family members (parents, grandparents, children) [where possible a death certificate should be provided]
- Family Emergencies requiring unexpected and urgent travel or caregiving responsibilities.
- Major political upheaval or natural disaster in a student's home country
- Traumatic experiences: Involvement in or witnessing an accident or crime, or a crime committed against the student or their family.

- Genuine delays to visas impacting their ability to commence their course on their starting day
- Situations where a student's safety or wellbeing is threatened
- Sudden and significant financial difficulties that impact a student's ability to continue studying.

**ESOS Act** means Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000.

**International student:** is defined as an Overseas student per the ESOS Act

**Overseas student:** An overseas student is not an Australian or New Zealand citizen an Australian permanent resident or holder of an Australian permanent humanitarian visa. An overseas student is defined as a person who holds an Australian student visa, whether they are within or outside of Australia.

**Offshore student:** An offshore student is a student that is studying at an overseas location and not in an Australian campus or at an Australian address.

## **POLICY**

Leave of absence (LOA) relates to a suspension of study for a period of time after enrolment has taken place. The duration of the approved Leave of Absence (LOA) shall not count towards the student's course duration, with the exception of HDR Candidates (refer to HDR Candidature Policy for details).

Domestic and offshore students may apply for LOA to the Registrar's Office.

International students must apply to the International Student Officer (ISO) for LOA to confirm whether they are eligible under the National Code 2018. Leave of Absence (LOA) can only be granted for a duration of up to 12 months for International students. International students must consider any impact LOA may have on their visa. Students may be asked to provide documentation to support their application for LOA.

### **Eligibility for Leave**

In the case of LOA, the student:

- has the approval of the Student Experience Department;
- is granted leave in periods of terms or semesters;
- is not enrolled in any subject during the period granted;
- is not engaged in any activities related to their studies;
- retains restricted access to AC facilities during the period of leave.

In circumstances where a course or subject is being phased out, students are required to complete a course plan taking into account these constraints before an application for LOA could be approved.

Students on LOA will not be permitted to undertake studies towards another tertiary course at AC. Exceptions may be made for those wishing to undertake study abroad for credit towards their course.

## **Applications for Leave of Absence (LOA)**

Students will be notified of the outcome of their application in writing, within ten (10) working days from the date of the decision. Students will be advised of the period for which the LOA has been granted.

Students are advised to apply for LOA prior to the commencement of the relevant teaching period and must submit their application prior to the census date. Applications for LOA submitted after the relevant census date will only be considered where compelling personal, medical or compassionate grounds exist.

If LOA is approved after the census date, students will remain financially liable for their subject enrolments at the census date. In exceptional circumstances (e.g., late withdrawal) a student may be eligible for a refund for the relevant subjects, even after a late application for LOA.

LOA will not usually be approved retrospectively unless in exceptional circumstances.

## **Student Visas**

AC may grant LOA to international students holding student visas, but the reason for taking leave may have an impact on the student's visa. The grounds on which student visa holders may request a LOA are set out in the National Code 2018. Students are recommended to seek advice from the Department of Home Affairs on the potential impact this has on their visa

AC is required to report students' Confirmation of Enrolments (COE) on PRISMS who have taken leave from their studies. Students who have taken leave for reasons not permitted under the legislation may be deemed to have discontinued their studies. If a student's COE is cancelled under these circumstances they will need to reapply to study and may need to apply for a new visa.

Responsible for implementation

Quality Assurance Committee

Key stakeholders

Students

Related documents

Course Handbook

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Procedures

## **Leave of Absence (LOA) Procedure**

### **Application Process**

Students should lodge their application through the Student Gateway, including all required supporting documentation.

### **Response to Application**

- Students will receive a written response to their application for LOA, including instructions for any further action that may be required.
- Where an application is denied, students will be given an explanation of the reason for the decision. A student who wishes to lodge an appeal in relation to this decision, should follow the procedure referenced in the Complaint, Grievance Resolution and Appeals Policy.
- Where applications are approved, the LOA for the approved period will be entered in the student management system.

### **Cancellation of Leave**

Students who wish to cancel their LOA should notify the Registrar's office in writing.

### **Implications of Leave for International Students**

Students who take a LOA may be required to lengthen the duration of their program by the period for which they are on leave. Temporary entrant visa holders permitted to take LOA are recommended to seek immigration advice. This requirement applies for all types of leave, including leave without approval. It is the responsibility of each student who takes LOA to ensure they re-enrol after their period of leave. Failure to comply with these instructions may result in termination of enrolment on the grounds that the student has discontinued their studies. Students shall be made aware of these implications when their leave of absence application is approved.

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