



Change of Study Load Procedure

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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 These procedures relate to the Terms and Conditions of Enrolment.
- 1.2 They describe how staff will enact the terms and conditions in respect to the steps taken for students to apply to change their study load at the Institute.

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy and procedure applies to all students (excluding ELICOS) seeking approval to change their study load at the Institute, subject to the conditions in these procedures, and staff involved in approving the requests. These procedures are aligned with applicable Australian Government legislation including the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training of Overseas Students 2018 (National Code).

3 PROCEDURES

- 3.1. A fulltime load at the Institute is normally four (4) units of study for undergraduate courses each compulsory study period. These procedures set out the five key processes involved in assessing a student's request to change their study load from a fulltime load, to either increase the number of subjects or load (also known as overload), or reduce the number of subjects or load (also known as reduced load), as per Table 1 below:

1. Eligibility

International students on a student visa must complete their course within the duration specified on their current Confirmation of Enrolment (COE). This requires international students to be enrolled fulltime in each study period. In limited circumstances an international student may be eligible to reduce their study load in a given study period. Domestic students are eligible to reduce their study load without seeking approval. Both domestic and international students are eligible to apply to increase their study load in limited circumstances.

2. Submit request

An international student must submit an application to reduce their study load with supporting documentary evidence. All students must submit an application to overload their subjects in a given study period.

3. Change of study load assessment and outcome

A change of study load application is assessed as per the guidelines explained in these procedures. Requests for a reduced study load from an international student can only be approved for compassionate or



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compelling circumstances, or where an intervention strategy has been implemented, as per Standard 8 of the National Code, with supporting documentary evidence.

4. *Appealing the outcome*

Students have the right to lodge a complaint regarding a decision that resulted in their request for a change of load being refused in accordance with the *Student Grievance Handling Policy and Procedure*.

5. *Recording/reporting*

Change of study load approvals are recorded accordingly on the student management system.

Table 1

| Process | Responsibilities | Timeframe |
|---|---|-----------|
| Step 1 Eligibility | | |
| <p>Reduced load:</p> <p>1.1. To be eligible to apply to reduce study load to less than fulltime, the following applies:</p> <p>1.1.1. Domestic students are eligible to reduce their study load, if their course permits part time study, by changing their enrolment by Census Date. They do not need to proceed further with these procedures.</p> <p>1.1.2. International students on a student visa may be eligible to apply to reduce their study load where:</p> <p>a. compassionate or compelling circumstances exist including (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • serious illness or injury affecting a student's ability to study; • witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime; • bereavement of close family members, such as parents or grandparents; • major political upheaval or natural disaster in a student's home country; • traumatic upheaval; • where the faculty is unable to offer a subject due to the structure of your course; or <p>b. academic difficulties exist and a reduced load is part of an intervention strategy.</p> <p>1.1.3. International students must contact the Student Services to discuss reducing their load before submitting an application.</p> <p>1.1.4. International students must provide supporting documentary evidence with their application which may include (but is not limited to):</p> <p>a. medical certificate/letter;</p> | <p>Student, Student Services</p> | |

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| <p>b. death certificate; c. police report; d. case number as evidence of an intervention strategy and proof of ongoing support from the Wellness team; and/or e. written approval for the reduced load request, from the sponsor of international sponsored students.</p> <p>1.1.5. Supporting documentary evidence if not issued in English must be translated by an official translator. Translators in Australia must be certified by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI).</p> <p>1.1.6. International students in their final study period do not need to seek approval to reduce their study load if the course will be completed during that study period.</p> <p>1.2. The Institute retains the right to approve or reject a request on a case by case basis.</p> <p>Overload:</p> <p>1.3. To be eligible to apply to overload the normal fulltime credit point limit, the following applies:</p> <p>1.3.1. The course rules must allow for a credit overload;</p> <p>1.3.2. An application for overload cannot normally be made in the first two enrolled study periods;</p> <p>1.3.3. Enrolments must not exceed a normal fulltime study load plus one subject in any one study period;</p> <p>1.3.4. A student cannot apply to overload a previously failed subject;</p> <p>1.3.5. Students must have good academic standing as defined by the <i>Course Progression Policy and Procedure</i> with a GPA of 4.0 or higher in the previous two study periods;</p> <p>1.3.6. A student may apply to overload in their second last study period, where the overload allows them to complete their course early, with no subjects remaining in the final study period; and</p> <p>1.4. The Institute retains the right to approve or reject a request on a case by case basis.</p> | | |
| <p>Step 2 Submit request</p> | | |
| <p>2.1 Students applying to reduce their study load or increase their study load must apply using the e-form by Census Date, together with supporting documentation as per 1.1.4 (if applicable).</p> | <p>Student</p> | <p>Before census date</p> |

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| Step 3 Change of study load assessment and outcome | | |
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| <p>Reduced load:</p> <p>3.1 A Discipline Head assesses and makes a decision on the request for a reduced study load based on the conditions of these procedures and approves or rejects the application, indicating the outcome on the form.</p> <p>3.2 Applications from international students for reduced study load will be rejected where the Institute determines:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> There are no compassionate or compelling circumstances to support the application; Insufficient evidence has been submitted; Fraudulent supporting documentation has been submitted; Financial or employment related issues are provided as a reason for reducing load; The intervention strategy did not include reduced load as a recommendation; and An international sponsored student did not obtain approval from their sponsor. | Discipline Head | 10 working days |
| <p>Overload:</p> <p>3.3 A Discipline Head assesses and makes a decision on the request for an overload based on the conditions of these procedures and approves or rejects the application, indicating the outcome on the form.</p> <p>3.4 Applications for overload will be rejected where the Institute determines:</p> <p>3.4.1 The eligibility criteria to overload, as detailed in clauses 1.3.1 - 1.3.6, was not met;</p> | | |
| <p>Outcome:</p> <p>3.5 A student is notified via email of the outcome within 10 working days of submission. If the assessment will take longer than 10 working days, the student will be notified.</p> <p>3.6 If the change of study load request is approved, the notification will include:</p> <p>3.6.1 Approval to reduce load OR overload including details of the subjects;</p> <p>3.7 If the change of study load request is rejected, the notification will include:</p> | | |



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| 3.7.1 The reason(s) for rejection; and | | |
| 3.7.2 The right to lodge a complaint about the decision within 20 working days as per the <i>Student Grievance Handling Policy and Procedure</i> . | | |
| Step 4 Appealing the outcome | | |
| 4.1 The student submits a complaint about the decision as per the <i>Student Grievance Handling Policy and Procedure</i> . | Student Services | |
| 4.2 Student Services is notified of the outcome of the review of the decision. | | |
| 4.3 If the refusal decision is upheld, no further action is required from Student Services. | | |
| 4.4 If the outcome is to grant the change of study load request, Student Services proceeds to Step 3.6 to notify the student of the approval. | | |
| Step 5 Recording/reporting | | |
| 5.1 The change of study load outcome is recorded on the student management system, including the reasons for approval and rejection. | Student Services | |
| 5.2 Student Services proceeds to drop or add the subjects as per the final outcome. | | |
| 5.3 The change of study load documentation, including the supporting documentary evidence is saved in the student management system. | | |

4. Roles and responsibilities

The Registrar is responsible for overseeing the change of study load procedures.

5. Compliance and monitoring

These procedures are written in accordance with the National Code and HESF.

6. Records management

As detailed in Table 1 above, release requests are recorded in the Institute's database and records of the request to change study load are filed and saved for two years.

7. Related documents

Terms and Conditions of Enrolment

Student Grievance Handling Policy and Procedure

Higher Education Standards Framework

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This policy and procedure complies with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015, Standard 5.2, which states:

1. There are policies that promote and uphold the academic and research integrity of courses and units of study, research and research training activities, and institutional policies and procedures address misconduct and allegations of misconduct.
2. Preventative action is taken to mitigate foreseeable risks to academic and research integrity including misrepresentation, fabrication, cheating, plagiarism and misuse of intellectual property, and to prevent recurrences of breaches.
3. Students are provided with guidance on what constitutes academic or research misconduct and the development of good practices in maintaining academic and research integrity.

This policy and procedure also complies with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015, Standard 7.2, which states:

2. Information for students is available prior to acceptance of an offer, written in plain English where practicable, accompanied by an explanation of any technical or specialised terms, and includes:
 - c) information to outline the obligations of students and their liabilities to the higher education provider including expected standards of behaviour, financial obligations to the higher education provider, critical deadlines, policies for deferral, change of preference/enrolment and leave of absence, particular obligations of international students, disciplinary procedures, misconduct and grounds for suspension or exclusion.

National Code 2018

The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 Standard 8 states that:

- 8.8 The registered provider of a higher education course must have and implement a documented policy and process for monitoring and recording course progress for the overseas student, specifying:
 - 8.8.1 requirements for achieving satisfactory course progress, including policies that promote and uphold the academic integrity of the registered course, and processes to address misconduct and allegations of misconduct.

4 FEEDBACK

- 4.1 PIA staff and students may provide feedback about this document by emailing policy@pia.edu.au.

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