



## Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation Policy

---

### **Policy**

This policy contains requirements that apply to all enrolments by international students.

### **Procedural Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students of American College (thereafter known as AC) are only able to defer or temporarily suspend their studies during the course through formal agreement in certain limited circumstances. This is to provide a procedure for assessing, approving and recording a deferment of the commencement of study, suspension or cancellation of study for the student, including keeping documentary evidence on the student's file of the assessment of the application or evidence of the initiation of the deferment, suspension or cancellation of enrolment procedures or status.

### **Definition of terms:**

**Cancelling** a student's enrolment means that the student is formally no longer a student of AC. Cancelling a student's enrolment becomes official once Department of Education, via PRISMS, is notified that the student's enrolment with AC has been cancelled.

**Deferring or suspending studies** means to temporarily delay or postpone studies. A deferment or suspension of studies can be initiated by either AC or the student. A deferment or suspension of studies becomes official once Department of Education, via PRISMS, is notified that the student's enrolment with AC has been suspended or deferred.

**DIBP:** Department of Immigration and Border Protection.

**DET:** Department of Education

**Students may apply for a deferment or suspension of studies. All suspensions, if greater than 28 days will be reported to Department of Education via PRISMS.**

It is important to keep in mind that should you apply for a deferment or suspension of studies, this may affect your course completion date which in turn may affect your student visa. Therefore, students planning to **defer, suspend or cancel their enrolment** are advised to contact DIBP on 131 881 for further information.

### **On what grounds may a student apply for a deferment or suspension of studies?**

The prospective students should find this information on the student's handbook, which also can be found on AC's website [www.americancollege.edu.au](http://www.americancollege.edu.au). Students wishing to defer or temporarily suspend their studies can only do so when there are genuinely compelling or compassionate circumstances. Compelling or compassionate circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- a) Serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes;
- b) Bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible, a death certificate should be provided);
- c) Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the student's studies; or
- d) A traumatic experience which could include:
  - o involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or
  - o 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)
- e) Where American College was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit; or
- f) Inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa;
- g) Student failure to meet unit prerequisites;
- h) Unavailability of units/subjects;
- i) Non-payment of fees;
- j) Student behaviour;
- k) Marriage and marriage of a sibling.

*Please note: Even if medical or other certificates are provided, the student cannot be guaranteed a suspension or deferment of studies. AC will use its professional judgement to assess each case on its individual merits.*

When completing an application form, if the above reasons do not cover reasons for deferral or suspension, or further explanation is necessary, the applicant should provide a more detailed explanation of the reasons in the space provided on the form.

### **How to apply for a deferment or suspension of studies?**

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Evidence Required</b>
“I have an illness that will stop me from fulfilling all the course requirements.”	Medical certificate to support the claim.
“The issuing of my student Visa has been delayed beyond my control”	Documentation from the relevant embassy
“A relative or friend of mine is very sick, and I have to take care of them. This will stop me from fulfilling all the course requirements.”	Medical certificate of the relative or friend, plus any supporting evidence requested by the College, i.e., proof of your connection with the person, etc.
“A friend or relative of mine died recently, and this will stop me from fulfilling all the course requirements.”	Death certificate of the relative or friend, plus any supporting evidence requested by the College, proof of your connection with the person, etc.
“I have personal problems that stop me from fulfilling all the course requirements.”	Written proof of this problem, either from the Student Services Officer or an equivalent professional.

Students must submit the Leave/Deferment/Suspension Form (available at the Reception or from the AC’s website <http://www.americancollege.edu.au> as this form is available for download) at least 10 working days prior to the start of the suspension period for which the student is applying. In exceptional cases, such as the death of a family member, this 10 working days period may be waived.

Together with the application form, the student needs to provide documentary evidence in support of the application. Documents may include, for example:

- A police report
- Medical certificates that clearly indicate the period during which the student is unable to attend classes. Generally, medical certificates without such evidence will not be accepted as proof that the student is unable to attend classes.
- Return air flight tickets to one’s home country

AC will process the application within **14 working days**. Should the application be refused, AC will provide written reasons for its decision. A copy of AC’s response will be kept in the student’s file.

#### **Additional important information:**

Students should keep in mind that, unless they have been granted, in writing, a formal approval to suspend studies, airline tickets should not be pre-purchased, as AC cannot guarantee that the student will be successful in his or her application for a suspension.

#### **On what grounds may AC initiate a cancellation or suspension of a student’s studies?**

AC reserves the right to cancel or temporarily suspend a student’s enrolment on the basis of:

1. Student misbehaviour, examples of which include, but are not limited to, behaviour which:
  1. seriously disrupts a class;
  2. could potentially bring AC into disrepute;
  3. poses a serious threat to the student’s, other students’ or staff health, safety or welfare;
  4. is dishonest, including theft of AC, staff or student property;
  5. shows great disrespect towards staff or students;
  6. is academically unethical such as engaging in plagiarism, cheating or other inappropriate behaviour; and

7. demonstrates a wilful misuse or damage of AC property or facilities.
2. Compelling reasons relating to the welfare of the student and/or other members of the College community. For example, if a student has a contagious disease and refuses to take leave, AC may be forced to suspend the student's studies, so as to protect the College community.

**Are there any other grounds on which AC may initiate a cancellation of a student's studies?**

1. Non-payment of fees
2. Unsatisfactory attendance
3. Unsatisfactory course progress
4. The student is due to commence studies but has not arrived in Australia nor contacted the College within 2 weeks of the semester's commencement date to explain the reason for his or her non-commencement of studies.
5. The student has not returned from semester break **and** has not paid the next semester's fees **and** has not contacted AC within **2 weeks** of the semester's commencement date to explain the reason for his or her non-commencement of studies. In this case, **no** Notification of Intention to Cancel or Suspend the student's enrolment letter will be issued, as the College has assumed that the student, by not paying his or her fees and not contacting AC, has indicated "inactively" that he or she will not be continuing with his or her studies.

**If American College initiates a cancellation or suspension of a student's studies, what process will the College follow?**

**WARNING LETTER:** In cases relating to attendance, course progress, or non-payment of fees, warning letters will be sent to the student's residential Australian address (please refer to *Attendance Policy*, *Course Progress Policy* and *Fee Payment Policies* for specific details on when and how warning letters are issued). Warning letters will not be issued in compelling circumstances requiring the immediate removal of the student's presence from campus (e.g. where the student has a contagious disease that poses a serious threat to other persons).

**Notification of Intention to Cancel or Suspend the Student's Enrolment:** Before taking the final step to cancel or suspend a student's enrolment, the student will be sent a Notification of Intention to Cancel or Suspend the student's enrolment letter to his or her Australian residence and given 20 working days within which to appeal the College's intention to cancel the student's enrolment.

A Notification of Intention to Cancel or Suspend the Student's Enrolment letter will not be issued in the circumstances covered by Point 5 above or where there are compelling circumstances requiring the immediate removal of the student from campus. This does not preclude the student's right to appeal AC's decision to suspend/cancel the student's enrolment. All such appeals must be made within 20 working days of the letter issued to the student indicating that his or her enrolment has been cancelled.

**Cancellation/Suspension Due to Misbehaviour**

In cases where AC has decided to cancel/suspend a student's enrolment due to misbehaviour (as outlined above), AC will take the following steps:

- Administration will contact the student to discuss the issue and to determine how the issue might be rectified. This meeting will be documented and signed by both parties and included in the student's file.
- Where the issue or behaviour continues, the student will be given a warning **in writing** and invited to discuss the issue with the International Student Support Officer. This meeting will be documented and signed by both parties and included in the student's file.
- Should the issue or behaviour persist, the student will be issued a final letter indicating AC's intention to cancel or temporarily suspend the student's enrolment. The letter will indicate that the student has 20 working days within which to appeal using AC's internal appeals process. A copy of this letter will be kept in the student's file.

**Before cancelling or suspending a student's enrolment, will American College wait for the Appeals Process to be completed?**

**Unsatisfactory attendance or academic progress**

If the student is appealing AC's intention to report the student to Department of Education via PRISMS for unsatisfactory attendance, non-payment of fees, academic progress, AC will maintain the student's enrolment throughout the appeals process, including the external appeal, should the student choose to access an external arbitrator. AC will only cancel a student's enrolment, if the student has not appealed or the appeals process is completed and the decision is in AC's favour.

**Other reasons**

If the student is appealing AC's intention to cancel or suspend his or her enrolment for other reasons, including **misbehaviour** (ref. previous section for list), AC will maintain the student's enrolment throughout the internal appeals process. AC is not required, however, to wait for the outcome of an external appeal before notifying Department of Education through PRISMS of the change to the student's enrolment. Once Department of Education has been notified of the change to the student's enrolment, the student has 28 days within which to choose one of the following 3 options:

- a. leave Australia
- b. show DIBP a new CoE
- c. provide DIBP with evidence that he or she has accessed an external arbitrator.

**Please note that American College may cancel the student's enrolment without waiting for the internal appeals process to run its course, if the College fears for the safety and wellbeing of the student and/or people the student may encounter. The student, however, can still appeal from his or her Australian residence or home country.**

**Attendance Monitoring during suspension or deferment of enrolment**

If a student has had his or her studies suspended or deferred, the student's attendance will not be monitored for the period covered by the suspension or deferment.

## **AMERICAN COLLEGE**

**180 Logan Road, Woolloongabba, Brisbane, Qld, Australia -4102**

**Ph: +61 (07) 3391 7599 Email: [info@americancollege.edu.au](mailto:info@americancollege.edu.au)**

**Website: [www.americancollege.edu.au](http://www.americancollege.edu.au)**