

## Deferral and Withdrawal Policy – VET

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**Policy Code:** STU-044    **Version:** 3.0    **Effective Date:** 24 November 2015

### Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the rules for domestic Vocational Education and Training (VET) students who wish to defer or withdraw from a unit of study (UOS) or course. The policy also outlines Administrative Withdrawal of a domestic student from a course.

**Definition of “College”** – *The Australian College of Natural Medicine Pty Ltd (ACNM) trades as Endeavour College of Natural Health, FIAFitnation, College of Natural Beauty and Wellnation. For the purpose of this policy, any reference to ‘College’ or ‘the College’ should be considered a reference to each or any of these respective trading names.*

- Scope:**
- All campuses offering VET courses
  - All VET domestic students
  - Student Services team
  - Office of Student Records
  - All VET staff (including contractors)

### Policy Statement:

The College expects VET students to actively engage in all study activities associated with their enrolled course and its units of study (UOS) in alignment with the course’s expected progression timeline. The College does however acknowledge that there are times whereby students cannot engage in their studies or do not wish to continue their studies.

Before a student decides to defer or withdraw from their study the College strongly recommends the student talk to a Student Adviser about their situation to ensure they are informed about any alternative options available at the College to vary their enrolment pattern, such as under Special Circumstances. Student Advisers may also be able to recommend external assistance such as

counselling or financial advice to the student for which they may be eligible. This may enable the student to continue their studies.

For those students however who cannot actively engage in their studies, or wish not to continue their studies the College will not impose any barriers to withdrawal and offers options of **deferrals** and **withdrawals**.

A student who does not actively participate in their studies but has not formally requested deferral or withdrawal may be **administratively withdrawn** by the College.

A student who defers, withdraws, or is administratively withdrawn may incur penalties (academic and/or financial). For further information on possible financial penalties please refer to the [Fees Policy – VET](#) for domestic students.

Note: This policy applies to **domestic** students only, for international students refer to the [Deferring Suspending or Cancelling Enrolment Policy - International](#).

## Deferral

Deferral is a formal process whereby a student's studies and their enrolment are halted for up to 12 months (maximum).

A deferral can only be requested by a student and deferral is for the entire course.

If the deferral request is granted by the College it will hold the student's enrolment for the granted period. A notation 'D', for deferral will be made in the student's record in the Student Management Systems. The student remains responsible for all debts and other charges related to the course at the time of deferral.

At the end of the deferral time if a student returns, they will re-enter the course at the same point at which they deferred and into the same UOS or its equivalent being offered by the College at the returning time. It is important to note that the course entered into following deferral will be the most current course version available (i.e. if course transition occurred while the student was deferred, they may be required to undertake additional study to ensure course progression in the new course structure).

If a student does not return by the end of the granted deferral period or does not return at all, they will be classified by the College as an **inactive** student (marked as such on their record) and will be administratively withdrawn 12 months after being classified as inactive (see Administrative Withdrawal below).

Students who wish to request deferral must:

- Complete a [Variation of Course Form – Higher Education and VET](#).

- Submit the form to Student Services.

Students can request a deferral at any time throughout their studies, although it is highly preferable that students request deferral in the break prior to the first teaching period they wish to defer. Students will not incur additional academic or financial penalties for a deferral but remain responsible for all tuition and/or resources fees and other incidental charges for the full teaching period; see [Fees Policy - VET](#) for further information (e.g. if a student defers after census date they will still be responsible for the full fees related to the enrolled UOS for that teaching period). The student remains responsible for all debts and other charges related with the course and UOS.

## Withdrawal

Withdrawal is the formal process whereby a student's studies are halted, and their enrolment is removed from one or all UOS (and in that case their course). A withdrawal can only be requested by a student and can be for withdrawal from a UOS or from the entire course.

### Withdrawal at UOS level

Students who wish to request withdrawal from one or more UOS (but not the entire course) PRIOR to census date must:

- Complete an [Add, Drop or Swap Form – Higher Education and VET](#).
- Submit the form to Student Services.

Withdrawal requests prior to census date do not attract academic or financial penalty.

Students who wish to request withdrawal from one or more UOS (but not the entire course) POST census date must:

- Complete an [Application for Special Circumstances Form](#)
- Submit the form to Student Services

If the withdrawal request is granted the National Student Services Manager will:

- Initiate investigations as to why the student withdrew e.g. possible 'student at risk' process to be initiated.
- Inform the Office of Student Records.

The Office of Student Records will:

- Record the relevant 'withdrawn' status for the UOS on the student's record (the Student Management Systems).

If the withdrawal request is denied the student can appeal the decision by applying to the Review Officer (Director Student Services) the designated person for any decisions related to a request for refund or re-credit of VET FEEHELP (see below)

### Withdrawal at course level

Students who wish to request withdrawal from the entire course must:

- Complete a [Withdrawal from Course Form – Higher Education and VET](#).
- Submit the form to Student Services.

If the withdrawal request is granted by the College Student Services will:

- Initiate investigations as to why the student withdrew e.g. exit interview.
- Inform the Office of Student Records.

The Office of Student Records will:

- Record the relevant 'withdrawn' status for any incomplete UOS on the student's record (the Student Management Systems).
- Record a 'withdrawn' status of the student on the student's record (the Student Management Systems).
- Issue relevant certification documentation as appropriate e.g. Statement of Attainment.

Students who wish to request withdrawal must:

- Complete a [Withdrawal from Course Form – Higher Education and VET](#).
- Submit the form to Student Services.

Students can request to withdraw from a UOS or course at any time throughout their studies. Students who submit and are granted withdrawal (at any level) by the College **before** the published census date for enrolled UOS will not incur academic penalties. Academically a grade of WR (Withdrawal Recorded) will be applied to their certification documents for the relevant UOS. Financial penalties may apply if the withdrawal was requested less than one month prior to the commencement date of the teaching period (refer to *Cancellation* in the [Fees Policy - VET](#)).

Students who submit and are granted a withdrawal (at any level) by the College **after** the published census date for the UOS **will** incur both academic and financial penalties unless they are granted [Special Circumstances](#). The academic penalty will be a grade of WF (Withdrawal with Failure) which will be applied to the student's certification documents. Financial penalties will also apply (refer to *Cancellation* in the relevant [Fees Policy - VET](#)).

Students who do not formally withdraw will incur both an academic and financial penalty. The academic penalty will be a grade of F (Fail) which will be applied to the student's certification

documents. Financial penalties will also apply (refer to *Cancellation* in the relevant [Fees Policy - VET](#)).

## Appeal a decision

Should a student wish to appeal the decision to deny a withdrawal at the level of the UOS or course or anything pertaining to a decision, they can appeal in writing to the Review Officer (Director Student Services) via the formal [Grievance Policy - VET](#)

The Review Officer will:

- acknowledge receipt of the application for review of a decision in writing within 10 working days; and
- inform the student that if the Review Officer has not advised them of a decision within 45 days of receipt of the application for review, it is taken that the Review Officer has confirmed the original decision.
- review the information from the original decision and then assess any new evidence provided by the student
- provide written notice to the student of the decision, setting out the reasons for the decision
- inform the student of their right to apply to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal if they disagree with the Review Decision, and timelines involved (see [Grievance Policy – VET](#) for further information).

## Administrative Withdrawal

Administrative withdrawal is the College's formal process by which a student is removed from their current enrolment for academic or non-academic reasons.

### Academic

Administrative withdrawal for academic reasons is when a student is removed from their current enrolment in a course as the student has lapsed in their UOS enrolments and/or lapsed in their study requirements. A student who is administratively withdrawn for academic reasons is to be made inactive until such time such time as they return to their study. These students will be classified as 'inactive' on their student record. An inactive student is one who has not enrolled in any UOS of their course, or have not complied with the study/training requirements over a 12 month period. Students will be administratively withdrawn from their entire course including any applicable UOS.

Students nominated as inactive by the College for academic reasons will be:

- Warned and given due notice and the opportunity to respond to the proposed administrative withdrawal actions.

If there is no subsequent response from the student they will be:

- Notified in writing that they have been administratively withdrawn for academic reasons.
- Removed from being able to access course materials.
- Removed from being able to access College auxiliary services, such as the Library.
- Given an 'AW' notation in the Student Management System.

Administrative withdrawal does not relieve the student of the responsibility for all tuition and/or resources fees and other incidental charges for the full teaching period. The student remains responsible for all debts and other charges related with the course and its UOS.

Students who are administratively withdrawn for academic reasons can:

- Re-apply for admission into the course and will be classified as 're-entry'. As a re-entry student the course entered into will be the most current course version available. All fees and charges associated with the re-entered course will be charged. If applicable, previous grades awarded may be reviewed by the Educational Pathways department to determine any relevant advanced standing to the re-entered course (on application).
- Receive the appropriate certificate documentation such as a Statement of Attainment.
- Appeal the administrative withdrawal decision made by the College as per the College's [Grievance Policy – VET](#).

## Non-Academic Withdrawal

Administrative withdrawal for non-academic reasons are applied when a student engages in behaviour that creates a dangerous or disruptive situation causing harm to self or others, or disrupts the learning environment or community.

The College considers the physical, mental and emotional welfare of its students of great importance. The College believes that all students must take responsibility for self-welfare, self-guardianship, and self-care while at all times. In addition, students must be responsible for conducting themselves in a manner that is not violent or disruptive. In cases where College staff consider a student's behaviour to be dangerous or disruptive to the College community, or presents a threat to the health and safety of students, staff or clinic clients, the College will intervene according to this policy.

Danger to self or others and destructive behaviour is defined to include but not limited to:

- Suicide attempts, or statements of suicidal intent
- Self-mutilation or injury

- Assault or threatened assault of students, staff or clinic clients
- Excessive use of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Misuse (including not taking as prescribed) or excessive use of prescribed medications
- Criminal activity.

Any of the above types of dangerous or disruptive behaviour may be in the form of a single behavioural incident or somewhat less severe but persistent dangerous or disruptive behaviour over an extended period. The decision to administratively withdraw based on non-academic reasons as outlined above will lie with the Director, Student Services and/or the Director, Student Retention & Systems.

Academic penalties for administrative withdrawal for non-academic reasons will be incurred with enrolled UOS awarded a 'CE' (College Excluded) notation on the student's record in the Student Management Systems. No additional financial penalty will be incurred however does not relieve the student of the responsibility for all tuition and/or resources fees and other incidental charges for the full teaching period. The student remains responsible for all debts and other charges related with the course and its UOS.

For further details refer to the [Administrative Withdrawal \(Non Academic\) Procedure](#) and the College's [Student Misconduct Policy – VET](#).

Students who are administratively withdrawn for non-academic reasons can:

- Re-apply for admission into the course after a 12 month period. The re-admission application must be reviewed and approved by the Director, VET Operations before they are enrolled.
- If approved, as a re-entry student the course entered into will be the most current course version available. All fees and charges associated with the re-entered course will be charged. If applicable, previous grades awarded may be reviewed by the Educational Pathways department to determine any relevant advanced standing to the re-entered course (on application).
- Receive the appropriate certificate documentation such as a Statement of Attainment.
- Appeal the administrative withdrawal decision made by the College as per the College's [Grievance Policy – VET](#).

## Responsibilities

The Director, Student Services will be the person with the responsibility to ensure this policy is implemented and adhered to by all staff and students of the College, and to ensure this policy is maintained and updated as related policies and procedures change.



- Comply with learning and assessment activities
- Comply with training requirements
- Attend required classes or online forums for 12 months without prior written approval
- Demonstrate satisfactory academic, training and course engagements in the twelve months preceding 12 months
- To complete sufficient opportunities such as examinations, assessments, clinic sessions etc.
- Engage in any form for twelve months with no contact to Student Services.

**Re-entry** – A student who has studied with the College previously and is considered to be an inactive student but wishes to re-enrol before administrative withdrawal is processed.

**Student/Learner** - is an individual person who is formally enrolled to study at the College. The individual person is that who appears on the College's documents such as enrolment, admission and payment documents, and who is assigned an individual student ID.

**Student Management Systems** – Customer relationship management databases including Filemaker and Amino.

**Withdraw/Withdrawal** – the formal process whereby a student is removed from their current study of a subject/unit of study or course.

## Further Information:

**Related Policies:** [Deferring Suspending or Cancelling Enrolment Policy – International Fees Policy – VET](#)  
[Grievance Policy – VET](#)  
[Student Misconduct Policy - VET](#)

**Benchmarking:** Deakin University Australia.  
 Macquarie University Sydney Australia.  
 TAFE Queensland.  
 TAFE NSW.

<b>Supporting Research and Analysis:</b>	<p>Australian Government. Study Assist. FAQs for current students – Study Assist</p> <p><a href="http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/studyassist/helpfulresources/pages/faqs-for-current-students">http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/studyassist/helpfulresources/pages/faqs-for-current-students</a></p> <p>Australian Government. Study Assist. Deadlines and withdrawals.</p> <p><a href="http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/studyassist/helpingmyfees/pages/relevant-deadlines">http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/studyassist/helpingmyfees/pages/relevant-deadlines</a></p>
<b>Related Documents:</b>	<p><a href="#">Add, Drop or Swap Form – Higher Education and VET</a></p> <p><a href="#">Variation of Course Form – Higher Education and VET</a></p> <p><a href="#">Withdrawal from Course Form – Higher Education and VET</a></p>
<b>Related Legislation:</b>	<p>Higher Education Support Act 2003</p>
<b>Guidelines:</b>	<p>Not applicable</p>

<b>Policy Author:</b>	Associate Director, Student Services
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<b>Approval Body:</b>	CEO (for ratification by College Council) Date: 8 April 2015
<b>Policy Status:</b>	Revised (deferral and withdrawal policies combined)
<b>Responsibilities for Implementation:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director, Student Services</li> <li>• Director, Student Retention and Systems</li> <li>• Director, VET Operations</li> <li>• General Manager, VET Health</li> <li>• Director, Aesthetics Education</li> <li>• General Manager, Fitness</li> <li>• Student Services team</li> </ul>
<b>Key Stakeholders:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director, Student Services</li> <li>• Director, Student Retention and Systems</li> <li>• Director, VET Operations</li> <li>• General Manager, VET Health</li> <li>• Director, Aesthetics Education</li> <li>• General Manager, Fitness</li> <li>• VET Training and Assessingstaff (including contractors)</li> <li>• Student Services team</li> <li>• VET Students</li> </ul>