

Leave Policy and Procedure

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25 Sep 2019	V1.1_SV	Updated in line with Attendance Policy, Course Progression Monitoring Policy, Student Academic and General Code of Conduct Policy	Shashank Vuppala
Mar 2022	V1.2	Minor amendment to section 3. Overall formatting.	K. Adhikari
Mar 2025	V2	Updated Campus details. Revised policy statements, added key definitions, updated compassionate grounds, and moved clauses to the Policy section.	K. Adhikari

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1. SCOPE

This policy applies to all students (international) enrolled with Axis Institute and outlines the process for assessing, documenting, and managing requests for absence or leave. It is aligned with obligations under Standard 9 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.

2. Definitions

Catch-up Session: A structured plan that enables students who have missed classes to recover lost learning and assessment.

CoE (Confirmation of Enrolment): An official document issued by a CRICOS-registered provider to confirm an international student's enrolment. It is used to apply for and maintain a student visa.

Compassionate or compelling circumstances: Situations that are generally beyond the student's control and significantly impact their ability to commence, attend, or progress through their course. These may include serious illness or injury, bereavement, major political upheaval, natural disasters, or other critical incidents. The circumstances must align with the intent of Standard 9 of the National Code 2018.

Extended leave of absence: Any student leave request that exceeds 7 consecutive calendar days and may result in a suspension of enrolment and/or a change to the student's CoE.

Generic medical certificate: A brief certificate issued by a general practitioner (GP) stating the student was ill on specific dates, but which lacks detailed information on the condition, diagnosis, or a statement confirming the student was unfit to attend classes or assessments.

Incomplete Application: A leave application submitted without the required supporting documents, missing information on the form, or failure to provide evidence that substantiates the reason for absence.

Leave of Absence: A short-term approved absence due to compassionate or compelling circumstances, which may or may not affect the student's CoE.

PRISMS: The Provider Registration and International Student Management System — the Australian Government system used to record and report changes to international student enrolment.

Retroactive application: A leave request submitted after the period of absence has already occurred, due to unforeseen or emergency circumstances that prevented the student from submitting the request in advance. Such applications must be accompanied by valid supporting evidence and a clear explanation of the delay.

Specialist report/certificate: A detailed document issued by a qualified medical specialist (e.g., psychiatrist, psychologist, or other relevant specialist) that provides a diagnosis or assessment of a significant or ongoing medical condition. It must include the nature and expected duration of the condition, how it affects the student's ability to study or attend classes, and must be signed, dated, and issued on official letterhead.

Study period: A discrete period of study within a course. Axis Institute defines each study period as 12 contact weeks. Where the remaining duration of the course is less than 12 weeks, the study period will be equal to the remaining duration of the course.

Suspension (of Enrolment): A temporary pause in a student's studies, during which they are not expected to attend classes or be marked on attendance.

3. Policy

- i. All overseas students will be informed and provided access to a copy of this policy on Axis Institute's website, www.axisinstitute.edu.au, to inform students of the basis on which applications for absence of leave will be assessed.
- ii. This policy is to be interpreted alongside Axis Institute's Attendance Policy, Course Progress Monitoring Policy, Deferring, Suspending and Cancelling Policy, and Student Academic and General Code of Conduct Policy.
- iii. This policy guides short-term leave requests that do not require a change in the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) end date. Requests that may impact enrolment or CoE duration must follow the Deferring, Suspending and Cancelling of Enrolment Policy.
- iv. Students are expected to use scheduled study breaks to attend to personal commitments. Leave outside these breaks is only approved under compassionate or compelling circumstances as defined by Standard 9 of the National Code 2018.
- v. A valid leave application can be submitted by filling out the *Leave Application Form*, available on Axis Institute's website, along with the supporting documents.
- vi. In emergency situations where a student is unable to contact the Institute personally, a family member or authorised contact may notify the Institute on their behalf by emailing qld@axisinstitute.edu.au or nsw@axisinstitute.edu.au with relevant details. This will assist in recording the student's absence and facilitate timely support.
- vii. For Retroactive application, the student must lodge the leave application as soon as reasonably possible following their return or recovery. These cases will be assessed under the same compelling and compassionate criteria. However, students are advised to inform the Institute of their absence as soon as practicable, even via informal channels (e.g., phone, email) if unable to submit a form immediately. Evidence should be provided as and when available.
- viii. All leave requests will be assessed and responded to within 5 to 10 working days, where practicable, from the date of submission, in accordance with documented procedures and to ensure timely support and compliance with Standard 9 of the National Code.
- ix. Leave requests based on medical grounds must be accompanied by valid and specific documentation from a registered health practitioner, including:
 - a. Date of consultation
 - b. Period of illness and confirmation the student was unfit to attend
 - c. Practitioner's name, provider number, signature, and practice letterhead or stamp

Note: Generic certificates that lack this detail may not be accepted. Students submitting two or more generic certificates within one calendar month will be required to submit a specialist report or detailed documentation explaining the medical condition and its ongoing impact.

- x. Valid compelling and compassionate circumstances may include (but are not limited to):
 - a. major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted the student's ability to study; or
 - b. Serious illness or injury to the student or to their dependent (e.g., child) for whom they hold carer responsibilities.
 - c. a traumatic experience, which could include:
 - i. involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or
 - ii. witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, and this has impacted on the overseas student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports)
 - d. birth of your child or adoption of a child
 - e. death of a close family member
 - f. inability to commence course due to non-issue of visa
 - g. where the Institute was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit
 - h. Transport disruptions such as strikes that prevent reasonable access to the campus (evidence required)
- xi. Compelling and compassionate documentation must be in English and may include (but not limited to):
 - a. Certificate or letter from a registered psychologist or medical specialist confirming a serious condition and inability to attend
 - b. A copy of a public record such as a government notice, weather report, or online media coverage regarding the major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel.
 - c. Death certificate of close family members
 - d. Police or psychologist reports
 - e. Medical evidence regarding a critically ill immediate family member
 - f. Official notice or evidence of transportation strikes or similar events affecting the student's ability to attend class
 - g. Axis Institute may also accept other forms of evidence that demonstrate compelling or compassionate grounds, provided they align with the intent and definition of such circumstances under relevant legislation or regulatory guidance as per Standard 9 of the National Code 2018.
- xii. In certain circumstances, students may not be able to apply for leave in advance. For example, if a student becomes unwell suddenly and is unable to notify the Institute beforehand, they may submit medical documentation retrospectively. These situations are valid and will be assessed accordingly, provided acceptable evidence is submitted. Retroactive

applications must clearly explain the circumstances and be supported by credible documentation. Other valid retrospective scenarios may include:

- a. Sudden hospitalisation or medical emergency
 - b. Involvement in or witnessing a traumatic event
 - c. Immediate family crisis requiring urgent attention
 - d. Transport disruption or strike not known in advance
- xiii. Axis Institute reserves the right to verify the authenticity of documents submitted by the student in support of their claim, before assessing the request.
- xiv. Students must refer to Axis Institute Deferring, Suspending, Cancelling Policy, which can be found on Axis Institute website, www.axisinstitute.edu.au while applying for an extended leave of absence.
- xv. Prior to travel, students must provide itinerary and overseas contact details. Students are strongly advised not to make any travel or personal arrangements until formal approval has been granted for the leave request.
- xvi. No leave will be approved if tuition fees remain outstanding at the time of request.
- xvii. Unapproved absences will be managed under the Attendance Policy.

4. Procedure

The following steps outline the process to request and assess student leave applications at Axis Institute. All students must follow these steps when applying for a leave of absence. Each application will be assessed individually based on the evidence provided and in line with the principles of compelling and compassionate circumstances as outlined in this policy.

- i. International students requesting leave of absence must make the request by initiating a discussion with a Student Services Officer.
- ii. After the consultation with the Student Services officer, the Leave of Absence Request Form and supporting documents must be submitted to Student Services or emailed to gld@axisinstitute.edu.au or nsw@axisinstitute.edu.au.
- iii. The form can be accessed from Axis Institute website: [Resources - Axis Institute](#).
- iv. Requests will be assessed against the nature of the supporting evidence by a Student Services team member.
- v. If the documentation provided by the student is assessed as supporting the leave request, then the student will be notified in writing within 5 to 10 days of submitting the application that their leave of absence or suspension has been approved and their student file updated.
- vi. Incomplete or insufficient applications will be denied with reasons provided in writing within 5 to 10 days of submitting the application.

- vii. The student may initiate an appeal against the Institute's decision in accordance with the Institute's Complaints and Appeals policy and procedure.
 - viii. If Axis Institute deems that the student genuinely has compassionate or compelling circumstances, approved short-term leave (≤ 7 days) is granted where:
 - a. Academic progress is satisfactory
 - b. No tuition fees are overdue
 - c. Student agrees to participate in catch-up sessions on return
 - ix. If Axis Institute deems that the student genuinely has compelling and compassionate circumstances and the student is applying for a leave of more than 1 week (7 calendar days), the student's CoE (Confirmation Enrolment) may be suspended for that period, under compelling and compassionate grounds and a new CoE may be issued for the student. There can be two possible outcomes for the student's CoE:
 - a. There is no change to the student CoE if:
 - Student attends classes virtually within allowable limits (excluding practical/lab)
 - Student agrees to a documented support plan
 - Student notifies return date and resumes immediately
 - b. CoE extended if:
 - Student cannot attend classes virtually
 - Student refuses additional study load
 - Return date is unclear or support plan not accepted
- Note: Axis Institute notifies the Department of Education and Training via PRISMS of the suspensions or deferrals. The existing CoE is cancelled and a new CoE with a more appropriate end date is created in case the student's return date is confirmed. If not, Axis Institute will wait till the student notifies of their intended date of return for creating a new CoE.
- x. During approved suspension, the student will be removed from class rolls and attendance monitoring.

5. Appeals Process

Students may appeal any decision through the Complaints and Appeals Policy. Forms and guidance are available at www.axisinstitute.edu.au.

6. Associated documents

- Deferral Suspension and Cancellation of Enrolment Policy and Procedure
- Leave application form/Enrolment Variation form
- Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Student Attendance Policy