

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Version | 4.3 |
| Short description | This policy outlines the responsibilities of students who wish to take a period of intermission (leave) from enrolment in their course. |
| Relevant to | All students Course Convenors Student Administration Services Staff |
| Authority | Academic Board |
| Policy owner | Director, Student Administration Services |
| Responsible office | Student Administration Services |
| Date approved | 14 June 2023 |
| Date effective | 23 June 2023 |
| Review due | March 2025 |
| Related Avondale documents | Course Withdrawal Policy International Students Policy Refund Policy Appeal Procedure (Academic) Study Load Policy Unit Enrolment Policy |
| Related legislation | Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 and related amendments National Code 2018 |
| Key words | Course, enrolment deadlines, ESOS, intermission, international student, progression, study leave, unapproved intermission, withdrawal |

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This document sets out Avondale University's (Avondale) policy and procedures for students who wish to take a period of approved intermission (leave of absence) from enrolment in their course.
- 1.2 Students are required to maintain enrolment in their course unless a period of intermission has been approved. To maintain enrolment, students must be enrolled in a minimum of one unit in the relevant teaching period/s associated with the course in which they are enrolled.
- 1.3 The objectives of this policy are to:
 - a) Identify the responsibilities students have in relation to applying for and returning from a period of approved intermission from their course enrolment.
 - b) Describe the additional responsibilities international students at Avondale with a student visa have in relation to taking approved intermission from their course enrolment, as required within the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 and the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education (the National Code) 2018.
 - c) Identify the responsibilities of relevant staff in relation to approving and recording intermission for students.
 - d) Outline the possible outcomes when students go on leave from their studies without taking approved intermission.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to students in undergraduate and postgraduate courses, including those in higher degree research courses, who wish to take a period of intermission from their studies.
- 2.2 This policy does not apply to students who plan to defer their course enrolment, which is to take time off before commencing the course. Deferring applies to new students in a course who discontinue their unit enrolment prior to the deadline to enrol in units in that course, but who still have the intention of commencing the course within one year.
- 2.3 This policy does not apply to students who wish to discontinue (withdraw from) their course enrolment.

3. REFERENCES

- 3.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with:
 - Course Withdrawal Policy
 - International Students Policy
 - Refund Policy
 - Appeal Procedure (Academic)
 - Study Load Policy
 - Unit Enrolment Policy

4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **Enrolment deadlines:** The published dates by which enrolment processes in Student Connect, including unit enrolment, are to be completed for a particular teaching period.
- 4.2 **Intermission:** A period of approved leave, where a student enrolled in a course, either full time or part time, is permitted to not be enrolled in any units for the nominated teaching period/s.
- 4.3 **International students:** Are students who require an *Australian Student Visa* to temporarily reside in Australia for study purposes.
- 4.4 **Teaching period:** A specified amount of time given for delivering curriculum within a course, eg 'semester', 'research semester' or 'trimester' or 'year-long'.
- 4.5 **Unapproved intermission:** The status of students who do not enrol in units the next relevant teaching period in their enrolled course and who have not been granted approved intermission.

5. TIME PERIOD ALLOWED FOR INTERMISSION

- 5.1 When determining if a request for intermission will be approved for coursework courses (undergraduate and postgraduate), the *maximum time allowed to complete the course* is considered to ensure the student will, on return from the leave, be able to complete the course within the maximum time.
- 5.2 When determining if a request for intermission will be approved for higher degree research candidates (Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Philosophy), the intermission period is added on to the maximum time in which to complete the course but is limited to two teaching periods.
- 5.3 Students (except for international students), whether enrolled full time or part time, are eligible to apply for *up to two consecutive teaching periods of intermission* at a time for various reasons. A period of intermission longer than two consecutive teaching periods, or more than a total of three teaching periods, may be permitted where there are compelling personal, health, compassionate or other reasons. However, such approval must consider course structure, availability of relevant units and any likelihood of course termination and therefore the decision is made by the relevant School Committee.
- 5.4 International students (on Australian student visas) may take intermission only where there are compassionate or compelling circumstances (with supporting documentation) as outlined in the *National Code 2018*. Intermission will be granted for a maximum of one teaching period at a time (semester or year-long as relevant to the course) only. Avondale will advise the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) of visa holders who have been granted intermission for such reasons. Where an extended period of intermission is required, the student must submit a new request with updated supporting documentation. Where students need to leave the course for reasons other than compassionate or compelling circumstances, including financial reasons, they are required to withdraw, and the DHA will be advised that course enrolment has been discontinued.

6. APPLICATION FOR INTERMISSION

- 6.1 Students who wish to take intermission must submit to Student Administration Services a completed *Intermission or Withdrawal from Course* form.

- 6.2 Supporting documentation must be submitted with an application for intermission by:
- International student visa holders
 - Students who have already taken two consecutive teaching periods, or a total of three periods of intermission and are seeking to extend that period of intermission
- 6.3 Because international student visa holders must leave Australia for the duration of intermission, unless otherwise approved by Avondale (e.g. where a student is prevented from leaving due to a medical condition) documentation with their application needs to include a copy of a plane ticket for departure from Australia within 14 days of submission of the application for intermission.
- 6.4 Where students wish to extend leave beyond an already approved period, a new *Intermission or Withdrawal from Course* form is to be submitted.

7. IMPLICATIONS OF TAKING INTERMISSION

- 7.1 Taking intermission will normally increase the time it takes to complete the course by at least the period of intermission taken but cannot increase it beyond the maximum time allowed as in points 5.1 and 5.2.
- 7.2 Students who take intermission will be liable for any fee increases, that have occurred while they have been away, which apply to their course or units.
- 7.3 Students who are scholarship recipients may find taking intermission has an impact on their eligibility to keep the scholarship and are advised to discuss any implications with the Scholarship Officer.
- 7.4 International students should contact the DHA for advice about any impact taking intermission will have on their student visa.
- 7.5 Students who have Commonwealth Supported Places when they commence intermission will have the places held for them long as long as they re-commence their studies in line with the approved duration of leave.
- 7.6 Research Higher Degree students who take a period of intermission are advised to discuss with their supervisor the implications this will have on their candidature time.
- 7.7 Students who are receiving payments from Centrelink (e.g., Austudy, Youth Allowance) are advised to contact Centrelink to determine the impact intermission will have on their payments.
- 7.8 Students who are approved to take intermission from their course after the teaching period commences, but before the relevant census date, will be deemed not to have commenced the unit/s in which they enrolled for that period. They will not be liable for the tuition fees for the unit/s and enrolment in that teaching period will not be recorded on their academic transcript.
- 7.9 Students who are approved to take intermission from their course after the census date, but before the completion date of a teaching period, will receive either Withdrawal Late without Academic Penalty (WL) or Fail Due to Late Withdrawal (FW) grades, as relevant, for any unit/s in which they were enrolled.
- 7.10 Where students take intermission after the census date, but before the completion date of a teaching period, they will be liable for the full tuition fee for any unit/s in which they were enrolled. If students believe they have extenuating circumstances which should be

considered for a refund or cancellation of their fee liability, they should submit a request under the Avondale Refund Policy.

8. RECORD OF INTERMISSION

- 8.1 Student Administration Services staff will record a student's intermission period/s in the Student Management System and it will be part of the student's permanent academic record.
- 8.2 Students who have been placed on a period of intermission will receive official notice, in writing, from Student Administration Services that it has been approved, the duration of the leave with the commencement and finishing dates specified and when they will need to re-enrol for the teaching period in which they wish to re-commence studies again.
- 8.3 Student Administration Services staff will advise relevant staff where a student has commenced intermission while a teaching period is in progress.
- 8.4 Students who have requested a period of intermission and have had it denied will be advised of the outcome and reason/s, in writing, by the Director, Student Administration Services.

9. DURING INTERMISSION

- 9.1 While in intermission, students must keep their contact details up to date in Student Connect to ensure they can be contacted by Avondale if required.
- 9.2 International students will be required to leave Australia for the duration of their course intermission unless otherwise approved by Avondale.
- 9.3 While students are on intermission they are not enrolled at Avondale and will therefore not have access to the institution's services (they can still access Student Connect unless they have a financial encumbrance). Where access to services is required in order to resolve an incomplete grade, special permission to allow this is to be sought from the relevant Course Convenor.

10. RE-ENROLMENT AFTER INTERMISSION

- 10.1 Students who are on intermission are required to complete re-enrolment in Student Connect, including enrolment in the units they expect to study in the teaching period when they return, by the relevant enrolment deadline published in the Academic Calendar. A late enrolment fee will be applied where the deadline is not met.
- 10.2 Students returning from approved intermission are considered to be continuing students and should not apply for admission as commencing students.
- 10.3 Following a period of intermission, students must consult their relevant Course Convenor regarding the requirements to complete their course. Normally the student will be required to complete the course under the conditions and rules in place at the time of their return from intermission.

11. UNAPPROVED LEAVE

- 11.1 Students who have completed at least one teaching period of study at Avondale and then

fail to enrol in a subsequent relevant teaching period, and who do not have approved intermission, will be deemed to have abandoned their studies and their course enrolment will be discontinued.

- 11.2 Students who have had their course enrolment discontinued under section 11.1 above, and who then wish to re-enrol, will have to submit a new application for admission to their course.
- 11.3 International student visa holders who fail to enrol in a teaching period and who have not been granted approved intermission for that period will be deemed to have abandoned their studies. Their course enrolment will be discontinued and the DHA will be advised accordingly.
- 11.4 Where a student’s course enrolment has been discontinued due to unapproved leave, re-admission to the course is not guaranteed.

12. APPEALS AGAINST DECISIONS

- 12.1 Students who wish to appeal decisions made or actions taken in relation to intermission from their course enrolment may do so under the Avondale Appeal Procedure (Academic).

Table of amendments

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Version Number | 4.3 | Replaces Version | 4.2, March 2023 |
| Implementation Date | 23 June 2023 | Scheduled Review Date | March 2025 |
| Approving Body | Academic Board | Approval Date | 14 June 2023 |
| Policy Owner | Director, Student Administration Services | Date first introduced | 30 July 2014 |
| Short description of amendment | <p>V4.3 Updated the definition of Intermission, introduced definition of Teaching Periods, updated clauses 5.2, 5.3 & 6.2 to give clarity</p> <p>V4.2 Updated branding, nomenclature and position titles, as relevant.</p> <p>V4.1 Updated position titles and committee names in line with restructure</p> <p>V4.0</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify time period allowed for intermission for HDR students • Update title of related policies where relevant • Update position title where relevant | | |