International Student Withdrawal and Release Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) This Procedure outlines the requirements for:

a. International students seeking to withdraw from their UQ studies, and
b. the assessment and approval of applications from international students who want to transfer between The University of Queensland and other registered providers before completing six calendar months of their principal program of study.

(2) Applications for transfer are assessed in accordance with the requirements of:

a. Standard 7 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (the National Code 2018); and
b. the Australian Government's Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act).

(3) This Procedure applies to any applicant for admission or student at UQ who is required to hold a student visa, including those issued with a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).

Section 2 - Process and Key Controls

(4) International students seeking to transfer to another registered provider before completing six months of their principal program must apply to the University for approval in accordance with the application process in clauses 13-18 and will be assessed under the criteria in clauses 19-20.

(5) The six calendar months is calculated from the scheduled commencement date of the student's principal program at UQ and does not include approved deferment periods or interruptions during enrolment in an earlier program.

(6) All other International students wanting to cease their enrolment at UQ are required to advise the University of their withdrawal as outlined in Section 3 Part A.

(7) Students who are in Australia on a student visa are required to maintain their ongoing eligibility for their visa for the entire duration of their stay in Australia. This includes a requirement to remain enrolled in a registered program and maintain satisfactory attendance and progress in the program as required by UQ. Failure to do so may result in notification to the Department of Home Affairs that student visa conditions are not being met which may impact any future visa applications.

(8) Students who want to transfer to UQ from another registered provider will be assessed under the criteria specified in clauses 33-34.

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Section 3 - Key Requirements

Part A - Withdrawal from UQ

(9) International students who are not required to request a transfer, but who must notify UQ of their intention to withdraw from their studies, include:

a. students who have not been issued a CoE;
b. students who have been issued a CoE but are not applying for a student visa;
c. students who have completed six or more calendar months of their principal program at UQ;
d. government sponsored students whose sponsor considers the change to be in the student's best interests and has provided written support to UQ for the transfer.

(10) Students must complete the Program Interruption, Withdrawal or Resumption Form before stopping their studies at UQ unless unexpected circumstances beyond their control prevent them from applying.

(11) Students withdrawing from studies will be given advice regarding the impact of withdrawing on any future enrolment, their student visa and any fees or deposit they have paid to UQ.

(12) When the withdrawal request is received, the University will:

a. cancel the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE);
b. notify the relevant Australian Government that the student is no longer enrolled at UQ;
c. advise the student about any further actions they need to take regarding their enrolment to remain lawfully in Australia; and
d. their eligibility and the process for refund of prepaid fees.

Part B - Withdrawal from UQ and transfer to another institution

Application process

(13) Under Australian law, international students granted a student visa to study at UQ must complete at least six months of their principal program at UQ before withdrawing and enrolling at another institution, unless approval has been granted by UQ.

(14) Students seeking to transfer to another registered provider before completing six months of their principal program must request a withdrawal from UQ and a transfer by:

a. completing the Program Interruption, Withdrawal or Resumption Form;
b. providing a copy of the offer letter from the provider the student wishes to transfer to; and
c. providing a personal statement outlining the reasons for the transfer request with supporting documentary evidence.

(15) Students under 18 years of age must also provide the following:

a. confirmation from their parent or legal guardian of their support for the transfer; and
b. if the student is not being cared for in Australia by a parent or suitable nominated relative, confirmation that the new registered provider will accept responsibility for approving the student's accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements consistent with Standard 5: Younger Overseas Students of the National Code 2018.

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(16) Until the request for withdrawal and transfer is approved, to meet the conditions of their student visa, students must remain enrolled and maintain satisfactory attendance and progress as required by UQ.

(17) Pathway program students are required to apply for a withdrawal from UQ and transfer, including:

a. Students who have completed the pathway program and met the conditions of their principal UQ program; and
b. Students who have not successfully completed the pathway program.

(18) Applicants asking to be released by the University will receive an acknowledgement that their request has been received.

Circumstances in which a release will be granted

(19) Transfer to another provider will be approved and a release granted where it is in the student's best interests to do so, including but not limited to where the University has assessed that:

a. The student is withdrawing from UQ and requesting a transfer on compassionate or compelling grounds as defined in Section 7.
b. The student's CoE will be cancelled due to unsatisfactory academic progress in their program after engaging with UQ's intervention strategy in accordance with the Academic Progression Procedure.
c. The student has received a package or articulation offer and, despite meeting the enrolment and attendance requirements and completing their pathway program, has not met the conditions specified in their offer letter to progress to the principal program.
d. The student has provided evidence that their reasonable expectations about the current program are not being met.
e. There is evidence that the student was misled by the University or an education or migration agent regarding UQ or its program, and the program is therefore unsuitable to their needs and/or study objectives.
f. The release has been approved or recommended as an outcome of:
    i. A formal grievance or appeal under the Student Grievance Resolution Policy and related procedures; or
    ii. an external review undertaken by the National Student Ombudsman or another external agency authorised to review the University's decisions under Australian Government Legislation.
    iii. A formal investigation of misconduct under the Student Integrity and Misconduct Policy and related procedures.

Circumstances in which a release may not be granted

(20) Despite clause 19, the University may refuse a transfer request on reasonable grounds. For example, a transfer request will not be approved if:

a. the student has not provided a copy of an offer from another CRICOS-registered provider, or has not met the conditions specified in that offer, or the due date for acceptance of that offer has passed;
b. the student has an outstanding debt to UQ or their enrolment and CoE have been cancelled due to non-payment of fees;
c. the request is based on personal preference or change of mind only;
d. the student does not complete all enrolment requirements by the prescribed due dates;
e. the student arrives after the agreed commencement date without prior written approval from the University;
f. the student is not genuinely engaging with an intervention strategy; and/or
g. the request is based on poor academic performance but the student has not made genuine attempts to engage with their studies or accessed the support or academic services offered by the University.

Consideration and outcome

(21) A student may be asked to attend an in person, phone or inline interview to assist with the assessment of their transfer request.

(22) Where a student has failed, or not completed, a pathway program their attendance and performance in their pathway program may be considered when assessing their transfer request.

(23) Students will be notified of the outcome of their application in writing as soon as practicable and generally within 10 working days of submitting a complete application with all required documentary evidence.

(24) There is no fee to apply for a transfer. If the transfer request is approved, a late cancellation of enrolment fee will apply.

Successful outcome

(25) The student will be informed in writing that:

a. their request to transfer to another institution is approved;
b. their UQ CoE will be cancelled and their release from the University, along with the effective date and reason for the release, will be recorded in PRISMS; and
c. they should confirm whether a new student visa is required with the Department of Home Affairs.

(26) If the student applied for a transfer before census date, their enrolment will be cancelled.

Unsuccessful outcome

(27) The student will be informed in writing of the following:

a. the reasons for the decision, including the factors taken into consideration;
b. that they may freely transfer between registered providers after they have completed six calendar months of their principal UQ program; and
c. that they may appeal the decision, in accordance with clauses 34-36 (Review and Appeals) of this Procedure.

(28) The reasons for refusal of the request will be sufficiently detailed to enable the student to make an informed decision whether to appeal.

(29) In all instances where a transfer request is refused, the University will not finalise the student's refusal status in PRISMS until the student has had the opportunity to appeal or, if the student has submitted an appeal, the appeal finds in favour of the University.

Review and appeals

(30) Where a transfer request from UQ has not been approved, and the student is not satisfied with the decision, they may appeal the decision within 20 working days of receipt of the application outcome in accordance with the Student Grievance Resolution Procedure.

(31) The student will be notified in writing of the outcome of their appeal.

(32) A student who is not satisfied with the outcome of an internal appeal may refer the matter to the National Student Ombudsman.

Part C - Transfer to UQ from another provider

(33) UQ will not enrol a student who wants to transfer from another registered provider before the student completes six calendar months of their principal program of study, except where:

a. the student has withdrawn from another provider consistent with the provisions of clause 9; or
b. the provider is no longer registered, or has a sanction imposed on it that prevents the student from continuing their principal program; or
c. the program in which the student is enrolled is no longer registered.

(34) Students who want to transfer to UQ from another registered provider before completing six months of their principal program will be issued with a UQ CoE only if:

a. the student completes the required admissions processes; and
b. the student has been granted a release by the existing provider and this is evidenced in PRISMS (or they provide evidence that they have not met the entry requirements for their principal program with the other provider and so no longer hold an active CoE); and
c. if the student is under the age of 18, they provide written evidence that the student's parent or legal guardian supports the transfer. If the student is not being cared for in Australia by a parent or suitable nominated relative, UQ will confirm it accepts responsibility for approving the student's accommodation, support and general welfare in accordance with Standard 5: Younger Overseas Students of the National Code 2018.

Section 4 - Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities

Academic Services Division

(35) The Deputy Director, Academic Services Division or an Associate Director in Academic Services Division or the Senior Manager, Student Enrolments and Fees consider and decide the outcome of transfer of provider requests.

Academic Registrar

(36) The Academic Registrar considers and assesses appeals against transfer of provider requests that have been denied.

Section 5 - Monitoring, Review and Assurance

(37) Student Enrolments and Fees will monitor and provide reports to the Academic Registrar to demonstrate compliance with this Procedure.

(38) Student Conduct and Grievance Resolution will monitor and report to the Academic Registrar on complaints and appeals in relation to this Procedure.

Section 6 - Recording and Reporting

(39) The transfer request, supporting documents, the reasons for the University's decision and all communications concerning the application and outcome will be filed in the student's record in TRIM.

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(40) The reasons for the University's decision will be adequately supported and documented in accordance with the Information Management Policy.

Section 7 - Appendix

Definitions, Terms and Acronyms

Term	Definition
Compassionate	Family, medical or wellbeing reasons for supporting a transfer. Examples of acceptable circumstances are included at Standard 7: Overseas Student Transfers – Resources. This may include but is not limited to: • Serious illness or injury • Death of a close family member (e.g. parents, grandparents) • major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel • Military service • Serious personal trauma
Compelling	Circumstances that are beyond an applicant or student's control and such that the applicant has little or no alternative.
CoE	Electronic Confirmation of Enrolment.
CRICOS	Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students.
Enrolled	Where a student is enrolled in courses, non-award study or programs approved by an authorised officer and after fees and charges have been paid.
ESOS	Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act).
Foundation Program	The Foundation Program guarantees graduates admission to a range of UQ programs, provided requirements including quota restrictions, grade point average, subject prerequisite and English language proficiency are met.
Government Sponsored	A student sponsored by an Australian or foreign Government for study in Australia.
International Student	A student who requires a student visa to study at UQ (also known as an overseas student) and is required to comply with the ESOS Act.
Pathway program	English language program, Foundation program; generally this is not the student's principal program of study.
Principal Program of Study	The main program of study to be undertaken by an international student where a student visa has been issued for multiple programs. The principal program of study is normally the final program of study covered by that student visa.
PRISMS	The Department of Education and Training's Provider Registration and International Student Management System through which providers issue Confirmation of Enrolments (CoEs) to international students.
Registered Provider	An approved provider that is registered on CRICOS as a provider for the program.
Release	Where a provider has agreed to the transfer of an international student to another provider, and has recorded the date of effect and the reason for the release in PRISMS.
Student Visa	A temporary visa (such as Student Visa (Subclass 500) or equivalent) which allows an international student to stay in Australia to study full-time at a recognised education institution.
Transfer between registered providers	An international student who applies to transfer to or from another CRICOS-registered provider.
TRIM	The University's electronic document and records management system (EDRMS).

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