

Withdrawal Without Penalty (Coursework) Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) To outline the steps to lodge and process an application to withdraw from a unit after the [Census Date](#) without academic and/or financial penalty due to Serious and Unavoidable Disruption.

Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to all coursework and honours students of Macquarie University, including students undertaking non-award study or admitted to the Bachelor of Philosophy or Master of Research, and to staff involved in the academic administration of coursework and honours study. Applications will be assessed in accordance with the policy in force at the time of application submission.

Section 2 - Policy

(3) Refer to the [Withdrawal and Discontinuance \(Coursework\) Policy](#).

Section 3 - Procedures

Responsibilities and Required Actions

(4) A student may withdraw from an enrolled unit at any time prior to [Census Date](#) without penalty.

(5) Students who withdraw from a unit after the unit [Census Date](#) are liable for the relevant unit fees.

(6) Students who withdraw from a unit after the Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty, incur both:

- a. a liability for the unit fees; and
- b. an academic penalty where the unit from which they have withdrawn is recorded with an 'F' (Fail) grade.

(7) If a student experienced Serious and Unavoidable Disruption to their studies, they may apply for Withdrawal Without Academic Penalty and / or Financial Penalty provided they evidence their claim.

(8) International students should refer to the Macquarie [International Fee Refund Policy](#) when requesting to withdraw without financial penalty.

(9) This Procedure requires actions by the following:

- a. Commonwealth Loans Scheme Officer;
- b. Student Administration Officer (Lifecycle);
- c. Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic);
- d. Registrar;

- e. Director, Student Administration;
- f. Director, Operations, Office of Financial Services (OFS);
- g. Finance Officer, Macquarie International;
- h. Faculty Executive Dean / Director, Macquarie University International College and English Language Centre;
- i. Unit Convenor; and
- j. Student.

(10) The steps in this Procedure include:

- a. withdraw without academic and / or financial penalty;
- b. submit evidence of unavoidable disruption;
- c. process application;
- d. assess application;
- e. assess and process refund; and
- f. consider appeal.

Director, Student Administration

(11) Ensure all requirements, timelines and associated forms are published and available to students and staff.

Student

(12) For an application to be considered, the timing of the impact of the event or circumstances must have been evident after [Census Date](#) or become substantially worse after [Census Date](#) such that it made it impossible to continue in your studies. The application must be submitted before the date for the final examination for that unit. If there is no final examination, an application must be submitted before the date of the final assessment item. In exceptional circumstances, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) may approve an application submitted at a later date.

Withdraw Without Academic and / or Financial Penalty

(13) You may wish to withdraw from a unit of study after the [Census Date](#) due to Serious and Unavoidable Disruption. The online [Withdraw without Penalty Request](#) must be completed by the student through [AskMQ](#). International students need to additionally request a fee refund according to the Macquarie [International Fee Refund Policy](#).

(14) You are additionally encouraged to seek academic advice from your Faculty Student Services Centre and / or counselling support from Student Wellbeing.

Submit and Retain Evidence of Serious and Unavoidable Disruption

(15) All available supporting documentation must be submitted electronically at the time of submitting the [Withdraw without Penalty Request](#).

(16) Determination of whether the disruption meets the Serious and Unavoidable criteria will commence once supporting documentation has been supplied.

(17) The University reserves the right to request and retain the originals of supporting documentation and will conduct regular audits of supporting documentation submitted electronically.

(18) Requests for original documentation will be sent to the student's University email address within six (6) months of notification of a Serious and Unavoidable Disruption by the student.

(19) Students must therefore retain all original documentation for this six (6) month period and must supply original documents to the University within ten (10) working days of such a request being made.

(20) All documentation (in hardcopy or electronic form) relating to an application to withdraw without Academic and/or Financial penalty will be treated in accordance with the University's [Privacy](#) Framework.

Medical Reasons

(21) Where the unavoidable disruption is of a medical nature, you must attach a medical certificate or [Professional Authority Form \(PAF\)](#) to your application noting that the information required by the University to consider your withdrawal application includes:

- a. the health professional's provider number;
- b. the date of consultation(s);
- c. the impact that the circumstances may have had on your ability to continue in your tertiary study;
- d. the severity (serious / not serious) of the condition; and
- e. the duration of the condition including the date it first became evident.

(22) Note: it is not necessary for the University to know the specific nature or details of a medical condition, rather, how it has affected your studies.

Employment Reasons

(23) Where the unavoidable disruption pertains to the unanticipated demands of employment, you must include a signed letter from your employer with the following:

- a. the date when employment circumstances changed;
- b. the type of and impact that the change in circumstances may have had on your ability to continue tertiary study;
- c. the duration of the change in circumstances including the date it first became evident; and
- d. contact details of your employer.

(24) If you manage your own business, you must provide a Statutory Declaration declaring:

- a. the date when business circumstances changed;
- b. the type of impact that the change in circumstances may have had on your ability to continue tertiary study; and
- c. the duration of the change in circumstances including the date it first became evident.

Other

(25) Where the unavoidable disruption is neither medical nor a consequence of employment, documentation must be attached to the application indicating:

- a. the date these circumstances first became evident and made their impact;
- b. the type of and impact that the circumstances may have had on your ability to continue tertiary study; and
- c. the duration of the change in circumstances.

(26) During the COVID-19 pandemic and until a date determined by the Academic Senate, where students have been impacted by COVID-19, students may submit a statement of fact as evidence.

Student Administration Officer (Lifecycle)

Process Application

(27) Consider all applications according to legislation and / or University policy.

Application for Withdrawal Without Academic Penalty

(28) Receive and log the application according to University procedures.

(29) Ensure that the application is complete and that it includes satisfactory supporting documentation / evidence.

(30) Where an application is incomplete, inform the student and request additional information as necessary. The claim may be rejected at this point if satisfactory evidence cannot be provided.

(31) Once all relevant information is received, withdraw the student from the unit under consideration, within the student system.

(32) Advise the student on the relevant template, that the application has been received and the grade has been amended to 'F' (Fail), and of the next steps in the process.

(33) Determine whether the event or circumstances pertaining to unavoidable disruption meets the requirements of the following criteria:

- a. could not have reasonably been anticipated, avoided or guarded against by the student; and
- b. was beyond the student's control.

(34) If the evidence does not confirm Clause 33 (a) and (b) above, advise the student in writing, explaining why their application has been unsuccessful.

(35) If the evidence confirms Clause 33 (a) and (b) above, forward the student's application to the relevant Head of Department or nominee to consider requirements (iii), (iv) and (v) of the Serious and Unavoidable Disruption definition per the [Withdrawal and Discontinuance \(Coursework\) Policy](#).

(36) Receive the Executive Dean's / Director, Macquarie University International College and English Language Centre or nominee's assessment.

(37) If the application has then satisfied the requirements of the Serious and Unavoidable Disruption definition and the grade has not already been ratified by University Council, amend the student record for the relevant unit to status 'W' (Withdrawn).

(38) If the grade has been ratified, forward the application to the Registrar for approval to amend the grade to status 'W' (Withdrawn).

(39) Receive the Registrar's decision. If the application is approved, amend the grade to status 'W' (Withdrawn).

(40) Provide confirmation to the student of the outcome of their application for withdrawal without academic penalty, explaining why their application was unsuccessful.

(41) All correspondence to the student will be electronic – either via the web and / or via the student's official email address.

Application for Withdrawal Without Financial Penalty

(42) Receive and log the application according to University procedures.

(43) Ensure that the application is complete and that it includes satisfactory supporting documentation / evidence. Guidelines for financial penalty are separate to academic penalty and can be found at [Guidelines for Applying for Remission/Refund/Reversal of Fees in Special Circumstances](#).

(44) Where an application is incomplete inform the student and request additional information as necessary. The claim may be rejected at this point if satisfactory evidence cannot be provided.

(45) Forward the application for consideration to the Coursework Commonwealth Loans Scheme Officer.

(46) The Commonwealth Loans Scheme Officer will determine whether the circumstances outlined by the student and the evidence are consistent with the definition of Serious and Unavoidable Disruption for the purpose of withdrawal without financial liability in accordance with the relevant legislation and/or University policy.

(47) If the application is approved according to legislation and / or University policy, process the application to effectively remove the debt.

(48) If the application is denied according to legislation and / or University policy, inform the student explaining why it was unsuccessful.

Unit Convenor

Assess Application

(49) In accordance with the Serious and Unavoidable Disruption definition, determine for each separate unit, whether the event or set of circumstances satisfies the following requirement: “(iii) caused substantial disruption to the student’s capacity for effective study and / or the completion of required work” to the extent that they were unfit to complete the unit.

(50) Record the assessment on the pro-forma explaining where the application successfully or unsuccessfully aligns with the Serious and Unavoidable Disruption definition.

(51) Forward the assessment decision to the Lifecycle Team (Student Administration).

Faculty Executive Dean / Director, Macquarie University International College and English Language Centre

(52) Ensure that the student’s application under requirements (iii), (iv) and (v) of the Serious and Unavoidable Disruption definition have been considered according to the [Withdrawal and Discontinuance \(Coursework\) Policy](#).

Registrar

(53) If the grade has been ratified and the recommendation is to amend the grade, assess the case for withdrawal without academic penalty on the grounds of Serious and Unavoidable Disruption definition. Notify the Lifecycle Team (Student Administration) whether or not the application is approved.

Commonwealth Loans Scheme Officer

Assess and Process Refund

Consider and Process Remissions: Domestic Students - with no fees paid directly to the University

(54) Consider the withdrawal without financial penalty for approval / non approval.

(55) If approved:

- a. arrange for relevant remission of HECS-HELP, FEE-HELP, and / or re-crediting of Student Learning Entitlement

(SLE); and

- b. advise the student of the outcome of their application for withdrawal without financial penalty.

Process Commonwealth Supported Students - with fees paid to the University

(56) On approval from the Director, Revenue Services, arrange for relevant remission of HECS-HELP, FEE-HELP, and / or re-crediting of Student Learning Entitlement (SLE) in accordance with relevant legislation.

(57) Advise the student of the outcome of their application for withdrawal without financial penalty.

Director, Operations, Office of Financial Services (OFS)

Consider and Approve Refunds / Remissions: Students-with fees paid directly to the University

(58) Consider the withdrawal without financial penalty for approval / non approval.

(59) If approved:

- a. arrange the relevant refund; or
- b. arrange the relevant remission of debt by advising the Commonwealth Loans Scheme Officer; and
- c. advise the student of the outcome of their application for withdrawal without financial penalty.

Finance Manager, Macquarie International

International Students

(60) On approval from the Director, Revenue Services, arrange for a refund of tuition fees in accordance with the Macquarie [International Fee Refund Policy](#).

(61) Advise the student of the outcome of their application for withdrawal without financial penalty.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

Consider Appeal

(62) In exceptional circumstances, a student may appeal their right for consideration of Withdraw without Academic and / or Financial Penalty on the basis of the following grounds:

- a. University policy and procedures were not correctly followed;
- b. new evidence is subsequently provided that may bear on the original decision.

(63) Appeals must be submitted to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) within twenty eight (28) days of the date of the letter advising the original decision.

(64) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) may consult with relevant stakeholders of the University in considering this and a decision will be considered against the criteria of Serious and Unavoidable Disruption.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(65) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(66) Commonly defined terms are located in the University [Glossary](#). Definitions specific to this Procedure are contained in the [Withdrawal and Discontinuance \(Coursework\) Policy](#).

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	27th May 2021
Review Date	1st June 2021
Approval Authority	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Approval Date	27th May 2021
Expiry Date	14th June 2021
Responsible Executive	Rorden Wilkinson Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Responsible Officer	Leanne Piggott Dean of Students
Enquiries Contact	Leanne Piggott Dean of Students