

## International Students Extension of Course Duration Policy

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### 1. Purpose

The National Code 2018 applies to all providers registered under the ESOS Act to deliver education and training courses to overseas students who come to Australia to study on a student visa. Melbourne Polytechnic must have and implement documented policies and procedures to comply with Standard 8 (*Overseas student visa requirements - Monitoring overseas student progress, attendance and course duration*) of the Educational Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) National Code 2018.

### 2. Policy Statement

This policy is committed to ensuring that quality is pursued in all aspects of the implementation of Standard 8 of the ESOS Act.

### 3. Principles

This policy will adhere to the following principles:

- value diversity
- promote natural justice
- offer equality of opportunity

### 4. Scope

This policy applies to new and continuing international students at Melbourne Polytechnic, staff in the International Office at Melbourne Polytechnic, and staff in Schools at Melbourne Polytechnic. This policy will only apply to international students holding an Australian student visa.

### 5. Policy

#### 1. Expected duration as specified in the student's CoE

- 1.1. Under Standard 8, except in limited circumstances, the expected duration of study specified in the student's CoE must not exceed the CRICOS registered course duration.
- 1.2. In order for students to complete study within the CRICOS registered course duration, students must study the full time load for which the course was CRICOS registered.
  - a. For Higher Education Sector courses, a full time load is usually 4 subjects per semester (96 credit points)
  - b. For ELICOS and VET Sector courses, a full time load is at least 20 hours per week (reference: *National Code 2018 Standard 11.2.1*)

#### 2. Extension to expected duration of study

- 2.1. The limited circumstances in which Melbourne Polytechnic can enable a student to extend the expected duration of study include:
  - a. Compassionate or compelling circumstances, assessed on the basis of demonstrable evidence that is generally beyond the international student's control.
  - b. Implementation of an intervention strategy because the international student is at risk of not meeting course progress requirements;
  - c. Approval of a deferment, leave of absence or temporary suspension of study, as specified under Standard 9, National Code 2018 and applicable Melbourne Polytechnic policy and procedure.

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### 3. Variation in student's enrolment load

- 3.1. Where there is a variation in the student's enrolment load, which may affect the student's expected duration of study, Melbourne Polytechnic is to record this variation and the reasons for it on the student file. Melbourne Polytechnic must correctly report the student via PRISMS and/or issue a new CoE when the student can only account for the variation/s by extending his or her expected duration of study.
- 3.2. A variation in study load may lead to the expected duration of study exceeding the CRICOS registered duration, approval to reduce a student's study load to less than a full-time load should only be given in accordance with the limited circumstances where an extension to a student's expected duration as specified on the student's CoE is allowable. Reasons for approval include:
  - a. Academic reason, including situations where
    - i. Melbourne Polytechnic is unable to offer a pre-requisite unit or subject
    - ii. there is an unavoidable timetable clash
    - iii. the student is completing the final units or subjects in the course
  - b. Compassionate reason, where situation is under the following circumstances:
    - i. Serious Illness, disability or injury. Medical certificate is needed stating the student's case and reasons affecting full time study.
    - ii. Bereavement of a close family member.
    - iii. Natural disaster or major political upheaval in student's home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the international student's studies.
    - iv. Any experience which has left the student feeling traumatised. This could be either being a victim or witnessing a serious crime and this has impacted on the international student's studies. Requires supporting documents from the police, or psychologist's reports.
    - v. Other exceptional circumstances not mentioned. Requires supporting documentation from Melbourne Polytechnic counselling service.
  - c. Student is subject to an intervention strategy.
- 3.3. Melbourne Polytechnic is to inform the student that a variation in study load may result in a change to their expected duration, which may have visa implications and that the student should consult with a registered migration agent if they are unsure of the possible visa implications. Where there is an extension to an international student's course duration resulting and the international student's visa will expire prior to the completion of the course, the student will need to apply for a new Student visa.
- 3.4. Where it is a requirement or where a student requests to have a variation in study load, the student and the relevant Manager of Program / Manager of School are to refer to [International Students Extension of Course Duration Procedure](#) and prepare [International Students Reduced Study Load Application Form](#).

### 4. Distance and/or online learning

- 4.1. Under Standard 8, Melbourne Polytechnic may allow an international student to undertake no more than 1/3 of the student's total course by distance and/or online learning. If online or distance learning are offered, an international student must be studying at least one unit face to face in each study period.

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### 6. Definitions

CoE: Confirmation of Enrolment

DHA: Department of Home Affairs

ESOS: Educational Services for Overseas Students

Study Period: Melbourne Polytechnic's academic year is typically divided into 2 study periods commonly referred to as Semester 1 and Semester 2, each of which is 24 weeks in duration

### 7. Responsibility and Accountability

Task	Responsibility	Notes
Under Standard 8 (Overseas Student Visa Requirements) of the Educational Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) National Code 2018, Melbourne Polytechnic must have and implement documented policies and procedures for monitoring the progress of each student to ensure that at all times the student is in a position to complete the course within the expected duration as specified in the student's CoE.	Manager, International Inbound  International Office team at Melbourne Polytechnic  Melbourne Polytechnic staff in Schools	
Under Standard 8, Melbourne Polytechnic must only enable students to extend the expected duration of study for the course through the issuing of a new CoE in limited circumstances.	Manager, International Inbound  International Office team at Melbourne Polytechnic  Melbourne Polytechnic staff in Schools	
Under Standard 8, Melbourne Polytechnic must ensure that in each compulsory study period for a course, the student is studying at least one unit that is not by distance or online learning.	Manager, International Inbound  International Office team at Melbourne Polytechnic  Melbourne Polytechnic staff in Schools	

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### 8. Supporting Documents and Templates

#### Related Documents

[International Students Extension of Course Duration Procedure](#)  
[International Students Reduced Study Load Application Form](#)

#### Legislative Context

Educational Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Framework -  
<https://internationaleducation.gov.au/regulatory-information/pages/regulatoryinformation.aspx>

### 9. Policy Control

<b>Approving authority</b>	<i>Melbourne Polytechnic Executive</i>
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